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THE
KING'S OWN.

BY
THE AUTHOR OF THE "NAVAL OFFICER."

O you Gods !
Why do you make us love your goodly gifts
And snatch them straight away ?
SHAKSPEARE'S *Pericles*.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE KING'S OWN.

CHAPTER I.

“ With leave, Bassanio, I am half yourself, and I must freely have the half of any thing that this same paper brings you.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE castle, which had been built by the ancestors of Mr. Rainscourt, and which, in feudal times, had been one of strength and importance, was about two miles from the town of —, in the county of Galway, on the west coast of Ireland: and, as Mr. Rainscourt had correctly surmised, when he returned to it no

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officer could be found who was bold enough to venture his life by an attempt at caption, surrounded as he was by a savage and devoted peasantry, who had no scruples at bloodshed. Immured between its walls, with little to interest, and no temptation to expend money, Mr. and Mrs. Rainscourt lived for nearly two years, indulging their spleen and discontent in mutual upbraidings,—their feelings towards each other, from incessant irritation, being now rather those of hatred, than any other term that could be applied. The jewels of Mrs. Rainscourt, and every other article that could be dispensed with, had been sold, and the purse was empty. The good will of the tenants of the mortgaged property had for some time supplied the ill-assorted couple with the necessities of life; every day added to their wants, to their hatred, and their despair.

They were seated at the table, having finished a dinner off some game which Mr. Rainscourt had procured with his gun, and which had been

their fare, with little variety, ever since the shooting season had commenced: when the old nurse, the only domestic they retained,—probably the only one who would remain with them without receiving wages,—made her appearance. “And sure there’s a letter for the master: Barney, the post-boy, is just bringing it.”

“Well, where is it?” replied Rainscourt.

“He says, that it’s two thirteens that must be paid for it, and the dirty spalpeen of a post-master tould him not to give you the letter without the money for it in his fist.”

“Tell Barney to step in here—have you two shillings, Mrs. Rainscourt?”

“Not one, Mr. Rainscourt,” replied the lady, gloomily.

The nurse re-appeared with Barney.

“Well, Barney, where’s the letter?” said Mr. Rainscourt; “let me look at it.”

“Sure, your honour, it’s not me that’s refusing it ye. But the master tould me—‘Barney,’

says he, 'if you give his honour the letter without the two thirteens in your fist, it's a good *bating* that I'll give ye when ye come back.' "

"Well, but, Barney, let me look at it, and see by the post-mark where it's from. I shall know, directly, whether I will take it up or not."

"And suppose that your honour should wish to open the letter! It's not for gentlemen like ye to be standing against the temptation;—and then, the two thirteens, your honour."

"Well, Barney, since you won't trust me, and I have no money, you must take the letter back. It might bring me good news—I have had nothing but bad of late."

"And sure enough it might bring you good news. Then, your honour shall take the letter and I'll take the *bating*;" and the good-natured lad pulled out the letter from his pocket, and gave it to Rainscourt.

Rainscourt, who first wished to ascertain whether it was one of his usual dunning corres-

pondents, examined the post-mark, and handwriting of the superscription, that he might return it unopened, and save poor Barney from the beating which he had volunteered to receive for his sake; but the hand was unknown to him, and the post-mark was so faint and illegible that he could not decipher it. He looked into the sides of the letter, and the few words which he could read whetted his curiosity.

“I’m afraid, Barney, that I must open it.”

“Good luck to your honour, then, and may it prove so.”

The letter was opened, and the contents threw a gleam of pleasure, which had been rarely seen of late, on the brow of the reader. His wife had watched his countenance. “Barney,” cried Rainscourt, with delight, “call to-morrow, and I’ll give you a guinea.”

“Sure your honour’s in luck, and me too,” replied Barney, grinning, and backing out of the room. “I’ll go take my bating at once.”

But, to explain the contents of this letter, we must narrate events of which we have lost sight in following up the naval career of our hero.

About three weeks after the death of Admiral De Courcy, the line-of-battle ship in which old Adams had sailed with our hero, under his protection, returned into port. The vicar, who anxiously awaited her arrival, immediately proceeded there, that he might claim Willy in the capacity of his guardian. Having obtained the address of Captain M——, he called upon him, and opened his case by requesting that the boy might be permitted to come on shore. He was proceeding to narrate the change which had taken place in his ward's prospects, when he was interrupted by Captain M——, who, first detailing the death of old Adams, and the conduct of Willy, stated that he had sent the boy home in the prize for an outfit. It was with great feeling that Captain M—— was forced to add the apparent cer-

tainty, that the vessel, which had never been heard of, had foundered at sea.

Shocked at the intelligence, which was communicated at a moment when his heart was expanded at the idea of having been instrumental in repairing the injustice and neglect which had been shewn towards his protégé, the vicar, not caring to mention to a stranger the family particulars upon which his request had been grounded, withdrew, without even giving his name or address. Three years afterwards, when, as we have narrated, our hero again made his appearance, Captain M—— had no clue to guide him, by which he might communicate the intelligence of his recovery, to one whom he naturally concluded did not make such inquiries without having some interest in our hero's welfare.

The vicar, in the meantime, although he had every reason to believe that Willy was no more, resorted to every means that his prudence could suggest, to ascertain the positive fact. For

many months, the most strict inquiries were set afloat by his agents, whether a captured vessel had been wrecked on the French coast. The prisoners at Verdun and other dépôts were examined, rewards were offered, by emissaries in France, for the discovery of the boy, but without success. Having waited two years, all hope became extinct, and the letter now received by Mr. Rainscourt was from the vicar, acquainting him with the circumstances, and surrendering up the property to him, as next of kin.

“ Pray, Mr. Rainscourt, may I ask the contents of a letter, the perusal of which not only makes you so generous, but implies that you expect to have the means of being so ? ”

When happy ourselves, especially when unexpectedly so, we feel kindly disposed towards others. For a moment Rainscourt seemed to have forgotten all his differences with his wife ; and he as readily imparted to her his good for-

tune as he had, on a previous occasion, his disappointment.

“ My dear Clara, the grandchild is dead, and we have possession of the property.”

“ My dear Clara !” Such an epithet had never been used since the first week of their marriage. Overcome by the joyful intelligence, but more overcome by the kind expression of her husband, which recalled the days when she fondly loved, Mrs. Rainscourt burst into tears, and throwing herself down with her face on his knees, poured out, in sobs, her gratitude to Heaven, and her revived affection for her husband.

Their daughter Emily, now ten years old, astonished at so unusual a scene, ran up, impelled as it were by instinct, and completed the family group, by clinging to her father. Rainscourt, who was affected, kissed the brow of the child, and congratulated her on becoming an heiress.

“ I never knew before that money would do

so much good," observed the child, referring to the apparent reconciliation of her parents.

Mrs. Rainscourt rose from her position, and sat down at the table, leaning her face upon her hands. "I am afraid that it has come too late," said she, mournfully, as she recalled the years of indifference and hostility which had preceded.

Mrs. Rainscourt was correct in her supposition. Respect and esteem had long departed, and without their aid, truant Love was not to be reclaimed. The feeling of renewed attachment was as transient as it was sudden.

"I must be off to England immediately," observed the husband. "I presume that I shall have no difficulty in obtaining money from the Bank, when I show this letter. Old —— will be ready enough to thrust his notes into my hands now."

"Shall we not go with you, Mr. Rainscourt?"

"No, you had better remain here till I have arranged matters a little. I must settle with

three cursed money lenders, and take up the bonds from J——. Little scoundrel, he'll be civil enough."

"Well, Mr. Rainscourt, it must, I suppose, be as you decide; but neither Emily nor I are very well equipt in our wardrobes, and you will not be exactly competent to execute our commissions."

"And therefore shall execute none."

"Do you, then, mean to leave us here in rags and beggary, while you are amusing yourself in London?" replied Mrs. Rainscourt, with asperity. "With your altered circumstances, you will have no want of society, either male or *female*," continued the lady, with an emphasis upon the last word—"and a *wife* will probably be an incumbrance."

"Certainly not such a kind and affectionate one as you have proved, my dear," replied the gentleman, sarcastically; "nevertheless I must decline the pleasure of your company till I have time to look about me a little."

“ Perhaps, Mr. Rainscourt, now that you will be able to afford it, you will prefer a separate establishment? If so, I am willing to accede to any proposition you may be inclined to make.”

“ That’s a very sensible remark of yours, my dear, and shall receive due consideration.”

“ The sooner the better, Sir,” replied the piqued lady, as Mr. Rainscourt quitted the room.

“ My dear child,” said Mrs. Rainscourt to her daughter, “ you see how cruelly your father treats me. He is a bad man, and you must never pay attention to what he says.”

“ Papa told me just the same of you, mamma,” replied the girl, “ yesterday morning, when you were walking in the garden.”

“ Did he ! The wretch, to set my own child against me !” cried Mrs. Rainscourt, who had just been guilty of the very same offence which had raised her choler against her husband.

CHAPTER II.

The Queen of night, whose vast command
Rules all the sea, and half the land ;
And over moist and crazy brains,
In high spring-tides at midnight reigns.

HUDIBRAS.

AMONG the millions who, on the hallowed and appointed day, lay aside their worldly occupations, to bow the knee to the Giver of all good, directing their orisons and their thoughts to one mercy-beaming power, like so many rays of light concentrated into one focus, I know no class of people in whose breasts the feeling of

religion is more deeply implanted, than the occupants of that glorious specimen of daring ingenuity, a man-of-war. It is through his works that the Almighty is most sincerely revered, through them that his infinite power is with deepest humility acknowledged. The most forcible arguments, the most pathetic eloquence from the pulpit, will not affect so powerfully the mind of man, as the investigation of a blade of grass, or the mechanism of the almost imperceptible insect. If, then, such is the effect upon mankind in general, how strong must be the impressions of those who occupy their business in great waters ! These men “see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.” They behold him in all his magnificence, in all his beauty, in all his wrath, in all his vastness, in all his variety. Unassisted by theory, they practically feel that God is great, and their worship, although dumb, is sincere.

I am aware, that it is the idea of many that sailors have little or no religion : and their dis-

solite conduct, when thrown on shore, is certainly a strong argument in support of this opinion; but they must not be so partially judged. Those who are constantly mixed with the world, and exposed to its allurements, are subject to a continual struggle against their passions, which they are more enabled to restrain, as temptation so rapidly succeeds temptation that one destroys the other,—effacing it from their recollection before they have had time to mature their embryo guilt. But in our floating monasteries, where rigid discipline and active duties allow only the thoughts to ramble to that society which never has been intended to be abandoned, the passions are naturally impelled towards that world, whose temptations are so much increased by long and unnatural seclusion.

In the mountain lake, whose waters are daily increasing, all is unruffled till their own weight has forced its boundaries, and the roaring cataract sweeps everything before it. Such is the

licentious and *impetuous* behaviour of the sailor on shore.

But on board he is a different being, and appears as if he were without sin and without guile. Let those, then, who turn away at his occasional intemperance, be careful how they judge. They may "thank God that they are not as that publican," and yet be less justified, when weighed in that balance, where, although Justice eyes the beam, Mercy is permitted to stand by, and throw into the scale her thousand little grains to counterpoise the mass of guilt.

Religion in a sailor (I mean by the term, a common seaman) is more of an active than a passive feeling. It does not consist in reflection or self-examination. It is in externals that his respect to the Deity is manifest. Witness the Sunday on board of a man-of-war. The care with which the decks are washed, the hauling taut and neat coiling down of the ropes, the studied cleanliness of person, most of which

duties are performed on other days, but on this day are executed with an extra precision and attention on the part of the seamen, because it is *Sunday*. Then the quiet decorum voluntarily observed; the attention to Divine Service, which would be a pattern to a congregation on shore; the little knots of men collected, in the afternoon, between the guns, listening to one who reads some serious book; or the solitary quarter-master, poring over his thumb'd Testament, as he communes with himself,—all prove that sailors have a deep-rooted feeling of religion. I once knew a first-lieutenant receive a severe rebuke from a ship's company. This officer, observing the men scattered listlessly about the fore-castle and waist of a frigate, on a fine Sunday evening, ordered the fiddler up, that they might dance. The ship's company thanked him for his kindness, but stated that they had not been accustomed to dance on that day, and requested that the music might be sent below.

The Sunday on board of a man-of-war has another advantage over the Sabbath on shore. It is hallowed throughout. It commences with respect and reverence, and it ends with the same. There is no alehouse to resort to, where the men may become intoxicated; no allurements of the senses to disturb the calm repose of the mind, the practical veneration of the day, which bestows upon it a moral beauty.

It was on the evening of such a day of serenity, after the hammocks had been piped down and the watch mustered, that Captain M—— was standing on the gangway of the *Aspasia*, in conversation with Macallan, the surgeon. It was almost a calm; the sails were not *asleep* with the light airs that occasionally distended them, but flapped against the lofty masts with the motion communicated to the vessel by the undulating wave. The moon, nearly at her full, was high in the heavens, steering for the zenith in all her beauty, without one envious cloud to obscure the refulgence of her beams, which were

reflected upon the water in broad and wavering lines of silver.

The blue wave was of a deeper blue—so clear and so transparent that you fancied you could pierce through a fathomless perspective, and so refreshing, so void of all impurity, that it invited you to glide into its bosom.

“How clear the moon shines to-night; to-morrow I think will be full moon.”

“It would be as well,” observed the surgeon, in reply to the remark of the captain, “to request the officer of the watch not to permit the men to sleep on the upper deck. We shall have many of them moon blind.”

“I have often heard that effect of the moon in the tropics mentioned, but have never seen it. In what manner does it affect the eyes?”

“The moon can act but in one way, Sir,” replied Macallan,—“by attraction. The men who are affected, see perfectly well in broad daylight; but as soon as it is dusk, their powers of vision are gone altogether. At the usual

time at which the hammocks are piped down, they will not be able to distinguish the numbers. I have had sixty men in one ship in the situation I have described."

"We ridicule the opinion of the ancients, relative to the powers of this planet," observed the captain; "but, at the same time, I have often heard more ascribed to her influence than the world in general are inclined to credit. That she regulates the tides is, I believe, the only point upon which there is now no scepticism."

"There has been scepticism even upon that, Sir. Did you ever read a work entitled 'Theory of the Tides?' I can, however, state some other points, from observation, in which the moon has power."

"Over lunatics, I presume?"

"Most certainly; and why not, therefore, over those who are rational? We observe the effect more clearly in the lunatic, because his mind is in a state of feverish excitement; but if the moon can act upon the diseased brain, it

must also have power, although less perceptible, over the mind which is in health. I believe that there is an ebb and flow of power in our internal mechanism, corresponding to the phases of the moon. I mean, that the blood flows more rapidly, and the powers of Nature are more stimulated, at the flood and full, than at the ebb and neap, when a reaction takes place in proportion to the previous acceleration. Dr. Mead has observed, that of those who are at the point of death, nine out of ten quit this world at the ebb of the tide. Does not this observation suggest the idea, that Nature has relaxed her efforts during that period, after having been stimulated during the flood? Shakspeare, who was a true observer of Nature, has not omitted this circumstance; speaking of the death of Falstaff, Mrs. Quickly observes, 'It was just at the turn of the tide.'"

" Well, but, Mr. Macallan, laying aside hypothesis, what have you ascertained, from

actual observation, besides that which we term moon blindness?"

"The effect of the moon upon fish, and other animal matter, hung up in its rays at night. If under the half-deck, they would remain perfectly sweet and eatable; but if exposed to the moon's rays, in the tropics, they will, in the course of one night, become putrid and unwholesome. They emit no smell; but when eaten, will produce a diarrhoea, almost as violent as if you had taken poison."

"I have heard that stated, also, by seamen," said the captain; "but have never witnessed it."

"A remarkable and corroborative instance occurred, when I was in the Bay of Annapolis," resumed the surgeon. "I was becalmed in a small vessel, and amused myself with fishing. I pulled up several herrings; but, to my astonishment, they were putrid and sodden an hour or two after they were dead. I observed the cir-

cumstance to one of the fishermen, who informed me, that several hundred barrels, taken at a fishery a few miles off, had all been spoiled in the same manner. I asked the reason, and the answer was, 'that they had been spawned at the full of the moon.' How far the man was correct, I know not ; but he stated that the circumstance had occurred before, and was well known to the older fishermen."

"Very singular," replied Captain M——. "We are too apt to reject the whole, because we have found a part to be erroneous. That the moon is not the Hecate formerly supposed, I believe ; but she seems to have more power than is usually ascribed to her. Is that seven bells striking?"

"It is, Sir ; the time has slipped rapidly away. I shall wish you good night."

"Good night," replied Captain M——, who, for some time after the departure of the surgeon, continued leaning over the rail of the entering-port, in silent contemplation of the

glassy wave, until the working of his mind was expressed in the following apostrophe:—

“Yes—placid and beautiful as thou art, there is foul treachery in thy smile. Who knows but that, one day, thou mayest, in thy fury, demand as thy victim the form which thou so peaceably reflectest? Ever-craving epicure! thou must be fed with the healthy and the brave. The gluttonous earth preys indiscriminately upon the deceased carcasses of age, infancy, and manhood; but thou must be more daintily supplied. Health, and vigour—prime of life, and joyous heart—high beating pulse, and energy of soul—active bodies, and more active minds,—such is the food in which thou delightest: and with such dainty fare wilt thou ever be supplied, until the Power that created thee, with the other elements, shall order thee to pass away.”

The bell struck eight, and its sharp peals, followed by the hoarse summoning of the watch below, by the boatswain's mates, disturbed his

reverie, and Captain M—— descended to his cabin.

And now, reader, I shall finish this chapter. You may, perhaps, imagine, that I have the scene before me, and am describing from nature : if so, you are in error. I am seated in the after-cabin of a vessel, endowed with as liberal a share of motion as any in his Majesty's service : whilst I write I am holding on by the table, my legs entwined in the lashings underneath, and I can barely manage to keep my position before my manuscript. The sea is high, the gale fresh, the sky dirty, and threatening a continuance of what our trans-Atlantic descendants would term a pretty-considerable-tarnation-strong blast of wind. The top-gallant-yards are on deck, the masts are struck, the guns double-breeched, and the bulwarks creaking and grinding in most detestable regularity of dissonance, as the vessel scuds and lurches through a cross and heavy sea. The main-deck is afloat : and, from the careless fitting

of the half ports at the dock-yard, and neglect of caulking in the cants, my fore-cabin is in the same predicament. A bubbling brook changing its course, ebbing and flowing as it were with the rolling of the ship, is dashing with mimic fury against the trunks secured on each side of the cabin.

I have just been summoned from my task, in consequence of one of the battens, which secured my little library, having given way to the immoderate weight of learning that pressed upon it: and as my books have been washed to and fro, I have snatched them from their first attempts at natation. Smith's *Wealth of Nations* I picked up first, not worth a *fig*; Don Juan I have just rescued from a second shipwreck, with no other *Hey-day* (Haidee) to console him, than the melancholy one extracted from me with a deep sigh, as I received his shattered frame. Here's Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, in a very melancholy plight, indeed, and (what a fashionable watering-place

my cabin has turned to !) here's Burke's Peerage, with all the royal family, and aristocracy of the kingdom, taking a dip, and a captain of a man-of-war, like another Sally Gunn, pulling them out.

So, you perceive, my description has been all moonshine.

“My wishes have been fathers to my thoughts;”

My bones are sore with rocking. Horace says, that he had a soul of brass who first ventured to sea ; I think a body of iron very necessary to the outfit. My cot is swinging and jerking up to the beams, as if the lively scoundrel was some metamorphosed imp mocking at me. ‘Sarve you right,—what did you *list* for?’ Very true,—why did I?—Well, anxious as I am to close this chapter, and to close my eyes, I will tell you, reader, what it was that induced me to go to sea. It was not to escape the drudgery and confinement of a school, or the admonitions received at home. The battle

of Trafalgar had been fought—I recollect the news being brought down by the dancing-master when I was at school ; but although I knew that eighteen or twenty sail of the line had been captured, yet never having seen a vessel larger than a merchant ship at London Bridge, I had very imperfect ideas on the subject—except that it must have been a very glorious affair, as we had a whole holiday in consequence. But when I returned home, I witnessed the funeral procession of Lord Nelson ; and, as the triumphal car upon which his earthly remains were borne disappeared from my aching eye, I felt that death could have no terrors, if followed by such a funeral ; and I determined that I would be buried in the same manner. This is the fact ; but I am not now exactly of the same opinion. I had no idea at that time, that it was such a terrible roundabout way to St. Paul's. Here I have been tossed about in every quarter of the globe, for between twenty

and five-and-twenty years, and the dome is almost as distant as ever.

I mean to put up with the family vault; but I should like very much to have engraved on my coffin—‘Many years Commissioner,’ or ‘Lord of the Admiralty,’ or ‘Governor of Greenwich Hospital,’ ‘Ambassador,’ ‘Privy Councillor,’ or, in fact, anything but Captain: for, though acknowledged to be a good travelling name, it is a very insignificant title at the end of our journey. Moreover, as the author of Pelham says, “I wish somebody would adopt me.”

Now that I have stated my wishes, I have only to add, that all communications on the subject, directed, *post paid*, to X. Y. Z., at Messrs. Colburn and Bentley’s, New Burlington-street, will meet with due consideration.

CHAPTER III.

When his pockets were lined, why his life should be mended,
The laws he had broken he'd never break more.

SEA SONG.

ON his return to London, M^cElvina immediately repaired to the residence of his patron, that he might enter into the necessary explanations relative to the capture of the vessel, and the circumstances which had produced his release from the penalties and imprisonment to

which he had been subjected by his lawless career. Previous, however, to narrating the events which occurred upon his arrival, it will be advisable to offer some remarks relative to McElvina, which, when they have been suggested to the reader, will serve to remove much of the apparent inconsistency of his character. That a person who, from his earliest childhood, had been brought up to fraud and deceit, should, of his own accord, and so suddenly, return to honesty, may at first appear problematical. But let it be remembered, that McElvina was not in the situation of those who, having their choice of good and evil, had preferred the latter. From infancy he had been brought up to, and had heard every encomium upon dishonesty, without having one friend to point out to him the advantages of pursuing another course. The same spirit of emulation which would have made him strenuous in the right path, urged him forward in his career of error. If, after his discharge from the Philan-

thropic School, he had had time to observe the advantages, in practice, of those maxims which had only been inculcated in theory, it is not improbable that he might have reformed; this, however, was prevented, by the injudicious conduct of his master.

But although the principles which had been instilled, were not sufficiently powerful, unassisted by reflection, to resist the force of habit, the germ, smothered as it was for the time, was not destroyed; and after M Elvina's seven years' servitude in a profession remarkable for candour and sincerity, and in which he had neither temptation nor opportunity to return to his evil courses, habit had been counteracted by habit. The tares and wheat were of equal growth. This is substantiated by the single fact of his inclination to be honest when he found the pocket-book. A confirmed rogue would never have thought of returning it, even if it had not been worth five shillings. It is true, if it had contained hundreds, that, in

his distressed circumstances, the temptation might have been too strong; but this remark by no means disproves the assertion, that he had the inclination to be honest. "There is a tide in the affairs of men," and it was on this decision between retaining or returning the pocket-book that depended the future misery or welfare of McElvina. Fortunately, the sum was not sufficient to turn the nicely balanced scale, and the generosity of old Hornblow confirmed the victory on the side of virtue.

I do not mean to assert that, for some time subsequent to this transaction, McElvina was influenced by a religious, or even a moral feeling. It was rather by interested motives that he was convinced, but convinced he was; and whether he was proud of his return to comparative virtue, or found it necessary to refresh his memory, his constant injunctions to others to be honest (upon the same principle that a man who tells a story repeatedly, eventually believes it to

be true) assisted to keep him stedfast in his good resolutions.

Upon the other points of his character it will be unnecessary to dilate. For his gentlemanly appearance and address he was indebted to Nature, who does not always choose to acknowledge the claims which aristocracy thinks proper to assert, and occasionally mocks the idea, by bestowing graces on a cottager which might be envied by the inhabitants of a palace. Of M^cElvina it may with justice be asserted, that his faults were those of education—his courage, generosity, and many good qualities, were his own.

M^cElvina, who knew exactly at what hour of the day his patron would be abroad, took the precaution of not going to the house until the time at which he would be certain to find Susan, as usual, in the little parlour, alone, and occupied with her needle or her book. The street-door had just been opened by the maid, to receive some articles of domestic use, which

a tradesman had sent home; and M^cElvina, putting his finger to his lips to ensure the silence of the girl, who would have run to communicate the welcome intelligence of his arrival, stepped past her into the passage, and found the door of the little parlour. Gently admitting himself, he discovered Susan, whom he had not disturbed, sitting opposite to the window, with her back towards him. He crept in softly behind her chair. She was in deep thought; one hand rested on her cheek, and the other held the pen with which she had been arranging the accounts of the former week, to submit them, as usual, to her father on the Monday evening. Of whom and what she was thinking was, however, soon manifested to M^cElvina, for she commenced scribbling and drawing with her pen on the blotting-paper before her, until she at last wrote several times, as if she were practising to see how it would look as a signature,

“ Susan M^cElvina.”

“ Susan M^cElvina.”

“ Susan M^cElvina.”

Although delighted at this proof that he was occupying her thoughts, M^cElvina had the delicacy to retire unperceived, and Susan, as if recollecting herself, slightly coloured, as she twisted up the paper and threw it under the grate ; in doing which, she perceived M^cElvina, who still remained at the door. A cry of surprise, a deep blush of pleasure over her pale face, and a hand frankly extended, which M^cElvina could with difficulty resist the impulse to raise to his lips, were followed up by the hasty interrogation of—"Why, your arm is in a sling? You did not say that you were hurt when you wrote from Plymouth?"

"It was not worth mentioning, Susan—it's almost well ; but, tell me, how did your father bear the loss of the vessel?"

"Oh ! pretty well ! But, Captain M^cElvina, you could not have done me a greater favour, or my father a greater kindness. He has now wound up his affairs, and intends to retire from all speculation. He has purchased a house in

the country, and I hope, when we go there, that I shall be more happy, and have better health, than I have had of late."

"And what is to become of me?" observed M^rElvina, gravely.

"Oh, I don't know—you are the best judge of that."

"Well, then, I will confess to you, Susan, that I am just as well pleased that all this has taken place as you are; for I am not sorry to give up a profession respecting which, between ourselves, I have lately had many scruples of conscience. I have not saved much, it is true; but I have enough to live upon, as long as I have no one to take care of except myself."

"You raise yourself in my opinion by saying so," replied Susan; "although it is painful to me to condemn a practice which impeaches my father. Your courage and talents may be better applied. Thank God, that it is all over."

"But, Susan, you said that you hoped to have better health. Have you not been well?"

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“Not very ill,” replied Susan; “but I have had a good deal of anxiety. The loss of the vessel,—your capture,—has affected my father, and, of course, has worried me.”

The discourse was now interrupted by old Hornblow, who had returned home to his dinner. He received M^cElvina in the most friendly manner, and they sat down to table.

After dinner, M^cElvina entered into a minute detail of all that had occurred,—and, as far as he was concerned, with a modesty which enhanced his meritorious conduct.

Susan listened to the narrative with intense interest: and as soon as it was over, retired to her room, leaving old Hornblow and M^cElvina over their bottle.

“Well, M^cElvina, what do you mean to do with yourself?” said the old man. “You know that Susan has at last persuaded me into retiring from business. I have just concluded the purchase of a little property near the sea-side, about seven miles from the village of ———, in Nor-

folk—it adjoins the great Rainscourt estate. You know that part of the coast.”

“Very well, Sir; there is a famous landing-place there, on the Rainscourt estate. It was formerly the property of Admiral De Courcy.”

“Ah! we don’t mean to smuggle any more—so that’s no use. I should not have known that it was near the Rainscourt property, only they inserted it in the particulars of sale, as an advantage; though I confess I do not see any particular advantage in a poor man living too near a rich one. But answer my question—What are you going to do with yourself? If I can assist you, M^{rs} Elvina, I will.”

“I do not intend to go to sea any more.”

“No! what then? I suppose you would like to marry, and settle on shore? Well, if I can assist you, M^{rs} Elvina, I will.”

“You could, indeed, assist me there, Sir.”

“Oh! Susan, I suppose. Nay, don’t colour up; I’ve seen it long enough, and if I had not meant that it should be so, I should have put

an end to it before. You are an honest man, McElvina, and I know nobody to whom I would give my girl sooner than to you."

"You have, indeed, removed a weight from my mind, Sir, and I hardly know how to express my thanks to you for your good wishes; but I have yet to obtain your daughter's consent."

"I know you have; you cannot expect that she will anticipate your wishes as I have done. But as I wish this business to be decided at once, I shall send her down to you, and I'll take a walk in the mean time. All I can say is, that if she says she has no mind to you, don't you believe her, for I know better."

"Susan!" said old Hornblow, going to the door.

"Yes, father."

"Come down, my dear, and stay with Captain McElvina. I am obliged to go out."

Old Hornblow reached down his hat, put on his spencer, and departed; while Susan, whose

heart told her that so unusual a movement on her father's part was not without some good reason, descended to the parlour with a quickened pulse.

"Susan!" said McElvina, who had risen from his chair to receive her, as soon as he heard her footsteps, "I have much to say to you, and I must be as brief as I can, for my mind is in too agitated a state to bear with much temporising. Do me the favour to take a chair, and listen while I make you acquainted with what you do not know."

Susan trembled; and the colour flew from her cheeks, as she sat down on the chair which McElvina handed to her.

"Your father, Susan, took me by the hand, at a time that I was in great distress, in consequence of my having pleased him by an act of common honesty. You know how kind and considerate a patron he has been to me since, and I have now been in his employ some years. This evening he has overpowered me with a

weight of gratitude, by allowing me to aspire to that which I most covet on earth, and has consented to my robbing him, if I can, of his greatest treasure. You cannot mistake what I mean. But, previous to my requesting an answer on a point in which my future happiness is involved, I have an act of justice to perform towards you, and of conscience towards myself, which must be fulfilled. It is to be candid, and not allow you to be entrapped into an alliance with a person of whose life you, at present, know but the fair side.

“First, let me state to you, Susan, that my parentage is as obscure as it well can be; and, secondly, that the early part of my life was as vicious. I may, indeed, extenuate it when I enter into an explanation, and with great justice: but I have now only stated the facts generally. If you wish me to enter into particulars, much as I shall blush at the exposure, and painful as the task assigned will be, I shall not refuse, even at the risque of losing all I covet, by the

confession: for, much as my happiness is at stake, I have too sincere a regard for you to allow you to contract any engagement with me, without making this candid avowal. Now, Susan, answer me frankly—whether, in the first place, you wish me to discover the particulars of my early life; in the next place (if you decline hearing them), whether, after this general avowal, you will listen to any solicitations, on my part, to induce you to unite your future destiny with mine?”

“Captain McElvina, I thank you for your candour,” replied Susan, “and will imitate you in my answer. Your obscure parentage cannot be a matter of consideration to one who has no descent to boast of. That you have not always been leading a creditable life, I am sorry for; more sorry because I am sure it must be a source of repentance and mortification to you; but I have not an idle curiosity to wish you to impart that which would not tend to my happiness to divulge. I did once hear an old gentlewoman,

who had been conversant with the world, declare, that if every man was obliged to confess the secrets of his life before marriage, few young women would be persuaded to go up to the altar. I hope it is not true; but whether it is or not, it does not exactly bear upon the subject in agitation. I again thank you for your candour, and disclaim all wish to know any further. I believe I have now answered your question."

"Not yet, Susan,—you have not yet answered the latter part of it."

"What was it?—I don't recollect."

"It was," said McElvina, picking up the piece of twisted paper which Susan had thrown under the grate,—“whether you would listen to my entreaties to sign your name in future as on this paper?”

"Oh, McElvina," cried Susan,—“how unfair. How ungenerous. Now I detest you!”

"I'll not believe that. I have your own hand-

writing to the contrary, and I'll appeal to your father."

"Nay, rather than that—you have set me an example of candour, and shall profit by it. Promise me, M^cElvina, always to treat me as you have this day,—and here is my hand."

"Who would not be *honest*, to be so rewarded?" replied M^cElvina, as he embraced the blushing girl.

"Ah,—all's right, I perceive," cried old Hornblow, who had opened the door unperceived. "Come, my children, take my blessing—long may you live happy and united."

CHAPTER IV.

He was a shrewd philosopher,
And had read ev'ry text and gloss over.
Whatever sceptic could enquire for,
For every *why* he had a *wherefore* :
He could reduce all things to acts,
And knew their nature by abstracts.

HUDIBRAS.

CAPTAIN M—— was not unmindful of the promise which he had made to M^cElvina, relative to our hero; and when he returned to the ship, he sent for Macallan the surgeon, and requested as a personal favour that he would superintend Willy's education, and direct his studies.

Macallan was too partial to Captain M—— to refuse, and fortunately had imbibed a strong regard for Willy, whose romantic history, early courage, and amiability of disposition, had made him a general favourite. Macallan, therefore, willingly undertook the tuition of a boy who combined energy of mind with docility of disposition and sweetness of temper. There could not have been selected a person better qualified than the surgeon for imparting that general knowledge so valuable in after-life ; and, under his guidance, Willy soon proved that strong intellectual powers were among the other advantages which he had received from nature.

The *Aspasia* flew before the trade winds, and in a few weeks arrived at Barbadoes ; where Captain M—— found orders left by the admiral of the station, directing him to survey a dangerous reef of rocks to the northward of Porto Rico, and to continue to cruise for some weeks in that quarter, after the service had been performed. In three

days the frigate was revictualled and watered ; and the officers had barely time to have their sea-arrangements completed, before the frigate again expanded her canvas to a favourable breeze. In a few hours the island was left as far astern as to appear like the blue mist which so often deceives the expectant scanner of the horizon.

“ You Billy Pitt ! is all my linen come on board ? ”

“ Yes, Sar,” replied Billy, who was in Courtenay’s cabin ; “ I make bill out ; just now cast up multerpication of whole.”

“ I’m afraid you very often use multiplication in your addition, Mr. Billy.”

“ True bill, Sar,” replied Billy, coming out of the cabin, and handing a paper to Courtenay.

“ What’s this ?—nineteen tarts ! Why, you black thief, I never had any tarts.”

“ Please let me see, Sar,” said Billy, peering over his shoulder. “ Yes, Sar, all right—I count e’m. Tell washerwoman put plenty of tarch in collar.”

"Shirts, you *nigger*!—why don't you learn to spell with that dictionary of yours?"

"Know how to spell very well, Sar," replied Billy, haughtily; "that my way spell 'tarts.'"

"'Fourteen tockin, seventeen toul.'—You do know how to spell to a T."

"Massa Courtenay, Doctor not write same way you write."

"Well, Mr. Billy."

"You not write same way me—ebery gentleman write different hand. Now, if ebery gentleman write his own way, why not ebery gentleman spell his own way? Dat my way to spell, Sar," continued Billy, very much affronted.

"I can't argue with you now, Mr. Billy—there's one bell after four striking, and I have hardly had a glass of wine, from your bothering me Upon my soul, it's excessively annoying."

"One bell, Mr. Courtenay!" cried Jerry, at the gun-room door; "Mr. Price will thank you to relieve him."

"I say, Mr. Prose," continued Jerry, as he passed through the steerage to return on deck, "I'll just trouble you to hand your carcass up as soon as convenient."

"Directly, Jerry,—I—will—but my tea—is so hot."

"Well, then, leave it, and I'll drink it for you," replied Jerry, ascending the ladder.

"Well, Mr. G — , did you tell Mr. Courtenay?" inquired Price.

"Yes, Sir," replied Jerry.

"What did he say?"

"He said, 'pass the bottle, Sir,'" replied Jerry, touching his hat and not changing a muscle of his countenance, although delighted with the vexation that appeared in that of the tired lieutenant, as he walked away forward.

For two or three days the frigate sailed between the islands, which reared their lofty crests abruptly from the ocean, like the embattlements of some vast castle which had been submerged to the water's edge. Her progress was slow, as she was only indebted to the land

or sea-breezes as they alternately blew, and was becalmed at the close of the day, during the pause between their relieving each other from their never-ceasing duty. Such was the situation of the *Aspasia* on the evening of the third day. The scene was one of those splendid panoramas which are only to be gazed upon in tropical climes. The sun was near setting: and as he passed through the horizontal streaks of vapour, fringed their narrow edges with a blaze of glory, strongly in contrast with the deep blue of the zenith reflected by the still wave in every quarter, except where the descending orb poured down his volume of rays, which changed the sea into an element of molten gold. The frigate was lying motionless in the narrow channel between two of the islands, the high mountains of which, in deep and solemn shade, were reflected in lengthened shadows, extending to the vessel's sides, and, looking downwards, you beheld the "mountains bowed." Many of the officers were standing abaft admiring the

beauty of the scene ; but not giving vent to their feelings, from an inward consciousness of inability to do justice to it in their expressions.

Macallan first broke the silence. "Who would imagine, Courtenay, that, ere yonder sun shall rise again, a hurricane may exhaust its rage upon a spot so calm, so beautiful, as this, where all now seems to whisper peace?"

The remark was followed by a noise like that proceeding from a distant gun. "Is it pace you mane, Doctor?" said one of the midshipmen, from the sister kingdom. "By the powers, there's 'war to the knife,' already. Look," continued he, pointing with his finger in a direction under the land, "there's a battle between the whale and the thrasher."

The remark of the midshipman was correct, and the whole party congregated on the taffrail to witness the struggle which had already commenced. The blows of the thrasher, a large fish, of the same species as the whale, given with incredible force and noise on the back of the

whale, were now answered by his more unwieldy antagonist, who lashed the sea with fury in his attempts to retaliate upon his more active assailant : and while the contention lasted, the water was in a foam.

In a few minutes, the whale plunged, and disappeared.

“ He has had enough of it,” observed the master ; “ but the thrasher will not let him off so easily. He must come up to breathe directly, and you’ll find the thrasher yard-arm and yard-arm with him again.”

As the master observed, the whale soon reappeared, and the thrasher, who had closely pursued him, as if determined to make up for lost time, threw himself out of the water, and came down upon the whale, striking him with tremendous force upon the shoulder. The whale plunged so perpendicularly, that his broad tail was many feet upraised in the air, and the persecuted animal was seen no more.

"That last broadside settled him," said Courtenay.

"*Sunk* him too, I think," cried Jerry.

"Strange," observed Courtenay, addressing Macallan, "that there should be such an antipathy between the animals. The West-Indians assert, that at the same time the thrasher attacks him above, the sword-fish pierces him underneath—if so, it must be very annoying."

"I have heard the same story, but have never myself seen the sword-fish," replied Macallan; "it is, however, very possible, as there is no animal in the creation, that has so many enemies as the whale."

"A tax on greatness," observed Jerry; "I'm glad it goes by *bulk*. Mr. Macallan," continued he, "you're a philosopher, and I have heard you argue that whatever is, is right—will you explain to my consummate ignorance, upon what just grounds the thrasher attacks that unoffending mass of blubber?"

"I'll explain it to you," said Courtenay, laughing. "The whale, who has just come from the northward, finds himself in very comfortable quarters here, and has no wish to heave up his anchor, and proceed on his voyage round Cape Horn. The thrasher is the port-admiral of the station, and his blows are so many guns to enforce his orders to sail forthwith."

"Thank you, Sir," answered Jerry, sarcastically, "for your very ingenious explanation; but I do not see why his guns should be shotted. Perhaps Mr. Macallan will now oblige me by his ideas on the subject."

"How far these islands may be the Capua to the whale, which Mr. Courtenay presumes, I cannot say," answered the surgeon, pompously; "but I have observed that all the cetaceous tribe are very much annoyed by vermin, which adhere to their skins. You often see the porpoises, and smaller fish of this class, throw themselves into the air, and fall flat on

the water, to detach the barnacles and other parasitical insects, which distress them. May it not be, that the whale, being so enormous an animal, and not able to employ the same means of relief, receives it from the blows of the thrasher?"

"Bravo, doctor! Why, then, the thrasher may be considered as a medical attendant to the whale; and, from the specimen we have witnessed of his humanity, a naval practitioner, I have no doubt," added Jerry.

"Very well, Mr. Jerry; if ever you come under my hands, you shall smart for that."

"Very little chance, doctor; I'm such a miserable object, that even disease passes by me with contempt. If I ever am in your list, I presume it will be for a case of plethora," replied Jerry, spanning his thin waist.

"Young gentlemen, get down directly. What are you all doing there on the taffrail?" bawled out the first-lieutenant, who had just come up the ladder.

"We've been looking at a sea-bully," said Jerry, in a tone of voice sufficiently loud to excite the merriment of those about him, without being heard by the first-lieutenant.

"What's the joke?" observed Mr. Bully, coming aft, as the midshipmen were dispersing.

"Some of Mr. J——'s nonsense," replied the surgeon.

This answer not being satisfactory, the first-lieutenant took it for granted, as people usually do, that the laugh was against himself, and his choler was raised against the offending party.

"Mr. J——! Ay, that young man thinks of anything but his duty. There he is, playing with the captain's dog; and his watch, I'll answer for it, or he would not be on deck. Mr. J——," continued the first-lieutenant to Jerry, who was walking up and down to leeward, followed by a large Newfoundland dog, "is it your watch?"

"Yes, Sir," replied Jerry, touching his hat.

"Then why are you skylarking with that dog?"

"I am not skylarking with the dog, Sir. He follows me up and down. I believe he takes me for a *bone*."

"I am not surprised at it," replied the first-lieutenant, laughing.

The surgeon, who remained abaft, was now accosted by Willy, who had been amusing himself, leaning over the side of a boat which had been lowered down, by the first-lieutenant, to examine the staving of the masts, and catching, in a tin-pot, the various minute objects of natural history which passed by, as the frigate glided slowly along.

"What shell is this, Mr. Macallan, which I have picked up? It floated on the surface of the water, by means of these air bladders, which are attached to it."

"That shell, Willy," replied Macallan, who, mounting his favourite hobby, immediately spouted his pompous truths, "is called, by

Naturalists, the *ianthina fragilis*, perhaps the weakest and most delicate in its texture which exists, and yet the *only one* * which ventures to contend with the stormy ocean. The varieties of the nautili have the same property of floating on the surface of the water, but they seldom are found many miles from land. They are only coasters, in comparison with this adventurous little navigator, which alone braves the Atlantic, and floats about in the same fathomless deep which is ranged by the devouring shark, and lashed by the stupendous whale. I have picked up these little sailors nearly one thousand miles from the land. Yet observe, it is his security—his tenement, of such thin texture to enable him to float with greater ease, would not be able to encounter the rippling of the wave upon the smoothest beach.”

“What use are they of?”

“Of no direct use that I know of, William ;

* I am aware that there are two or three other pelagic shells, but, at the time of this narrative, they were not known.

but if it has no other use than to induce you to reflect a little, it has not been made in vain. All created things are not applicable to the wants or the enjoyment of man; but their examination will always tend to his improvement. When you analyse this little creature in its domicile, and see how wonderfully it is provided with all means necessary for its existence,—when you compare it with the thousand varieties upon the beach, in all of which you will perceive the same Master-hand visible, the same attention in providing for their wants, the same minute and endless beauty of colour and of form,—you cannot but acknowledge the vastness and the magnificence of the Maker. In the same manner, the flowers and shrubs, which embellish, as they cover the earth, are not all so much for use, as they are for ornament. What human ingenuity can approach to the perfection of the meanest effort of the Almighty hand? Has it not been pointed out in the Scriptures—‘Consider the lilies of the

field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.' Never debate in your mind, Willy, of what use are these things which God has made—for of what *use*, then, is man, the most endowed and the most perverse of all creation, except to shew the goodness and the forbearance of the Almighty! You may, hereafter, be inclined to debate, why noxious reptiles and ferocious beasts, that not only are useless to man, but a source of dread and of danger, have been created. They have their inheritance upon earth, as well as man, and combine with the rest of animated nature, to shew the power, and the wisdom, and the endless variety of the Creator. It is true that all animals were made for our use; but recollect, that when man fell from his perfect state, it was declared, 'In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread.' Are trackless forests, and yet unexplored regions to remain without living creatures to enjoy them,

until they shall be required by man? And is man, in his fallen state, to possess all the earth, and its advantages, without labour,—without fulfilling his destiny? No. Ferocious and noxious animals disappear only before cultivation. It is a part of the labour to which he has been sentenced, that he should rend them out as the ‘thistle and the thorn;’ or drive them to those regions, which are not yet required by him, and of which they may continue to have possession undisturbed.”

Such was the language of Macallan to our hero, whose thirst for knowledge constantly made fresh demands upon the surgeon’s fund of information; and, pedantic as his language may appear, it contained important truths, which were treasured up by the retentive memory of his pupil.

CHAPTER V.

How frail, how cowardly is woman's mind !
Yet when strong jealousy inflames the soul,
The weak will roar, and calms to tempests roll.

LEE'S *Rival Queen*.

BUT we must now follow up the motions of Mr. Rainscourt, who quitted the castle, and travelling with great diligence, once more trod the pavement of the metropolis, which he had quitted in equal haste, but under very different circumstances. The news of his good fortune had preceded him, and he received all that

homage which is invariably shewn to a man who has many creditors, and the means of satisfying all their demands. As he had prophesied, the little gentleman in black was as obsequious as could be desired, and threw out many indirect hints of the pleasure he should have in superintending Mr. Rainscourt's future arrangements; and, by way of reinstating himself in his good graces, acquainted him with a plan for reducing the amount of the demands that were made upon him. Rainscourt, who never forgave, so far acceded to the lawyer's wishes, as to permit him to take that part of the arrangements into his hands; and, after Mr. J—— had succeeded in bringing the usurers to reasonable terms—when all had been duly signed and sealed, not only were his services declined for the future, but the servants were desired to shew him the street door.

As his wife had remarked, Rainscourt found no difficulty in making *friends* of all sorts, and of both sexes—and he had launched into a

routine of gaiety and dissipation, in which he continued for several months, without allowing his wife and daughter to interrupt his amusements, or to enter his thoughts.

He had inclosed an order upon the banker at ———, soon after his arrival in London, and he considered that he had done all that was requisite. Such was not, however, the opinion of his wife—to be immured in a lonely castle in Ireland, was neither her intention nor her taste. Finding that repeated letters were unanswered, in which she requested permission to join him, and pointed out the necessity that Emily, who was now nearly twelve years old, should have the advantages of tuition which his fortune could command, she packed up a slender wardrobe, and in a week arrived in London with Emily, and drove up to the door of the hôtel, to which Rainscourt had directed that his letters should be addressed.

Rainscourt was not at home when she arrived ; announcing herself as his wife, she was shewn

up stairs into his apartments, a minute survey of which, with their contents, was immediately made; and the notes and letters, which were carelessly strewed upon the tables, and all of which she took the liberty to peruse, had the effect of throwing Mrs. Rainscourt into a transport of jealousy and indignation. The minutes appeared hours, and the hours months, until he made his appearance, which he at last did, accompanied by two fashionable roués with whom he associated.

The waiters, who happened not to be in the way as he ascended the stairs, had not announced to him the arrival of his wife, who was sitting on the sofa in her bonnet and shawl, one hand full of notes and letters, the superscriptions of which were evidently in a female hand—and the other holding her handkerchief, as if prepared for a scene. One leg was crossed over the other, and the foot of the one that was above, worked in the air, up and down, with the force of a piston of a steam engine,

indicative of the propelling power within,—when Rainscourt, whose voice was heard all the way up stairs, arrived at the landing place, and, in answer to a question of one of his companions, replied—

“Go and see her! Not I—I’m quite tired of her—By Jove I’d as soon see my wife;” and as he finished the sentence, entered the apartment, where the unexpected appearance of Mrs. Rainscourt made him involuntarily exclaim, “Talk of the devil—”

“And she appears, Sir,” replied the lady, rising, and making a profound courtesy.

“Pooh, my dear,” replied Rainscourt, embarrassed, and unwilling that a scene should take place before his companions—“I was only joking.”

“Good morning, Rainscourt,” said one of his friends—“I’m afraid that I shall be *de trop*.”

“And I’m off too, my dear fellow, for there’s no saying how the joke may be taken,” added

the other, following his companion out of the room.

Emily ran up to her father, and took his hand; and Rainscourt, who was as much attached to his daughter as his selfish character would permit, kissed her forehead.

Both parties were for a short time silent. Both preferred to await the attack, rather than commence it; but in a trial of forbearance of this description, it may easily be supposed that the gentleman gained the victory. Mrs. Rainscourt waited until she found that she must either give vent to her feelings by words, or that her whole frame would explode; and the action commenced on her side with a shower of tears, which ended in violent hysterics.

The first were unheeded by her husband, who always considered them as a kind of scaling her guns previous to an engagement; but the hysterics rather baffled him. In his own house, he would have rung for the servants and left them

to repair damages ; but at an hôtel, an éclat was to be avoided, if possible.

“ Emily, my dear, go to your mother—you know how to help her.”

“ No I do not, papa,” said the child, crying ;
“ but Norah used to open her hands.”

Raincourt's eyes were naturally directed to the fingers of his wife, in which he perceived a collection of notes and letters. He thought it might be advisable to open her hand, if it were only to recover these out of her possession. What affection would not have induced him to do, interest accomplished. He advanced to the sofa, and attempted to open her clenched hands ; but whether Mrs. Rainscourt's hysterics were only feigned, or of such violence to defy the strength of her husband, all his efforts to extract the letters proved ineffectual, and, after several unavailing attempts, he desisted from his exertions.

“ What else is good for her, Emily ?”

"Water, papa, thrown in her face—shall I ring for some?"

"No, my dear—is there nothing else we can do?"

"Oh, yes, papa, unlace her stays."

Rainscourt, who was not very expert as a lady's maid, had some difficulty in arriving at the stays through the folds of the gown, et cetera, the more so as Mrs. Rainscourt was very violent in her movements, and he was not a little irritated by sundry pricks which he received from those indispensable articles of dress, which the fair sex are necessitated to use, pointing out to us that there are no roses without thorns. When he did arrive at the desired encasement, he was just as much puzzled to find an end to what appeared, like the Gordian knot, to have neither beginning nor end. Giving way to the natural impatience of his temper, he seized a penknife from the table, to divide it *à l'Alexander*. Unfortunately, in his hurry, instead of inserting the knife on the outside of the lace, so

as to cut *to* him, he cut down upon it, and not meeting with the resistance which he expected, the point of the knife entered with no trifling force into the back of Mrs. Rainscourt, who, to his astonishment, immediately started on her legs, crying out, "Would you murder me, Mr. Rainscourt?—help, help!"

"It was quite accidental, my dear," said Rainscourt, in a soothing tone, for he was afraid of her bringing the whole house about her ears. "I really am quite shocked at my own awkwardness."

"It quite recovered you, though, mamma," observed Emily, with great simplicity, and for which remark, to her astonishment, she was saluted with a smart box on the ear.

"Why should you be shocked, Mr. Rainscourt?" said the lady, who, as her daughter had remarked, seemed wonderfully recovered from the *phle-back-omy* which had been administered,—"why should you be shocked at stabbing me in the back? Have I not wherewithal in my

hand to stab me a thousand times in the heart ? Look at these letters, all of which I have read ! You had, indeed, reason to leave me in Galway ; but I will submit to it no longer. Mr. Rainscourt, I insist upon an immediate separation."

"Why should we quarrel, then, my dear, when we are both of one mind ? Now, do me the favour to sit down, and talk the matter over quietly. What is it that you require ?"

"First, then, Mr. Rainscourt, an acknowledgment on your part that I am a most injured, and most ill-treated woman."

"Granted, my dear, if that will add to your happiness. I certainly have never known your value."

"Don't sneer, Sir, if you please. Secondly, a handsome allowance, commensurate with your fortune."

"Granted, with pleasure, Mrs. Rainscourt."

"Thirdly, Mr. Rainscourt, an extra allow-

ance for the education and expenses of my daughter, who will remain under my care."

"Granted also."

"Further, Mr. Rainscourt, to keep up appearances, I wish one of the mansions on your different estates in England to be appropriated for our use. Your daughter ought to be known, and reside on the property of which she is the future heiress."

"A reasonable demand, which I accede to. Is there any thing further?"

"Nothing of moment; but, for Emily's sake, I should wish that you should pay us an occasional visit, and, generally speaking, keep up appearances before the world."

"That I shall be most happy to do, my dear, and shall always speak of you, as I feel, with respect and esteem. Is there any thing more, Mrs. Rainscourt?"

"There is not; but I believe that if I had been ten times more exorbitant in my de-

mands," replied the lady, with pique, "that you would have granted them—for the pleasure of getting rid of me."

"I would, indeed, my dear," replied Rainscourt; "you may command me in any thing, except my own person."

"I require no *other* partition, Sir, than that of your fortune."

"And of that, my dear, you shall, as I have declared, have a liberal share. So now, Mrs. Rainscourt, I think we can have no further occasion for disagreement. The property in Norfolk, where Admiral De Courcy resided, is a beautiful spot, and I request you will consider it as your head-quarters. Of course you will be your own mistress when you feel inclined to change the scene. And now, as all may be considered as settled, let us shake hands, and henceforward be—good friends."

Mrs. Rainscourt gave her hand, and sealed the new contract; but, ill-treated as she had been,—at variance with her husband for years,

—and now convinced that she had been outraged in the tenderest point, still her heart leaned towards the father of her child. The hand that now was extended in earnest of future separation, reminded her of the day when she had offered it in pledge of future fidelity and love, and had listened with rapture to his reciprocal obligation. She covered her face with her handkerchief, which was soon moistened with her tears.

Such is woman ! To the last moment she cherishes her love, pure as an emanation from the Deity. In the happy days of confidence and truth, it sheds a halo round her existence ;—in those of sorrow and desertion, memory, guided by its resistless power, like the gnomon of the dial, marks but those hours which were sunny and serene.

However, Mrs. Rainscourt soon found out that an unlimited credit upon the banker was no bad substitute for a worthless husband ; and, assisted by her pride, she enjoyed more real

happiness and peace of mind than she had done for many years. During her stay in London, Rainscourt occasionally paid his respects, behaved with great kindness and propriety, and appeared not a little proud of the expanding beauty of his daughter. Mrs. Rainscourt not only recovered her spirits, but her personal attractions; and their numerous acquaintance wondered what could possess Mr. Rainscourt to be indifferent to so lively and so charming a woman. In a few weeks the mansion was ready to receive them, and Mrs. Rainscourt, with Emily, and a numerous establishment, quitted the metropolis to take up their abode in it for the ensuing summer.

CHAPTER VI.

Pericles.—That's your superstition.

Sailor.—Pardon us, Sir. With us at sea it still hath been observed, and we are strong in earnest.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE weather was fine, and the water smooth, on the morning when the *Aspasia* arrived at the reef, which, although well known to exist, had been very incorrectly laid down, and Captain M—— thought it advisable to drop his anchor, in preference to laying off and on so near to dangers which might extend much farther than he was aware. The frigate was, therefore, brought up in

eighteen fathoms, about two miles from that part of the reef which discovered itself above water.

The captain and master undertook the survey ; but any officers, who volunteered their assistance, or midshipmen, who wished to profit by the opportunity of gaining a practical knowledge of maritime surveying, were permitted to join the party, another boat having been lowered down for their accommodation. Hector, the captain's Newfoundland dog, was flying about the decks, mad with delight, as he always was when a boat was lowered down, as he anticipated the pleasure of a swim. Captain M——, who had breakfasted, and whose boat was manned alongside, came on deck ; when the dog fawning on him, he desired that his broad leather collar, with the ship's name in large brass letters rivetted round it, should be taken off, that it might not be injured by the salt water. Jerry, who was on deck, and received the order, asked the captain for the key of the padlock which secured it, and Captain M—— handed him his bunch of keys,

to which it had been affixed, and desiring him to take the collar off, and return the keys to him, descended again to his cabin.

Jerry soon dispossessed the dog of his collar, and, ripe for mischief, went down to the midshipman's berth, where he found Prose alone, the rest being all on deck, or scattered about the ship. Prose was the person that he wanted, being the only one upon whom he could venture a practical joke, without incurring more risque than was agreeable. Jerry commenced by fixing the collar round his own neck, and said, "I wish I could get *promotion*. Now, if the situation of *captain's dog* was only vacant, I should like the rating amazingly. I should soon get fat then, and I think I should look well up in this collar."

"Why, Jerry, that collar certainly does look as if it was made for you; it's rather ornamental, I do declare."

"I wish I had a glass, to see how it looks.

I would try it on you, Prose, but you've such a bull neck, that it wouldn't go half round it."

"Bull neck, Jerry—why, I'll lay you six-pence that my neck's almost as small as yours; and I'll lay you a shilling that the collar will go round my neck."

"Done; now let's see—recollect, the staple must go into the hole, or you lose," said Jerry, fixing the collar round Prose's neck, and pretending that the staple was not into the hole of the collar until he had inserted the padlock, turned and taken out the key.

"Well, I do declare I've lost, Prose. I must go and get you the shilling," continued Jerry, making his escape out of the berth, and leaving Prose with the collar so tight under his chin, that he could scarcely open his mouth. Jerry arrived on the quarter-deck just as the captain was stepping into the boat, and he went up to him, and touching his hat, presented him with the bunch of keys.

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Jerry; I had forgotten

them," said Captain M——, descending the side, and shoving off.

"Whose clothes are these hanging on the davit-guys?" said Mr. Bully, who had given order that no clothes were to be drying there after eight o'clock in the morning.

"I believe that they are Mr. Prose's, Sir, though I am not sure," answered Jerry, who knew very well that they were not, but wished that Prose should be sent for.

"Quarter-master, tell Mr. Prose to come up to me directly."

Jerry immediately ran down to the berth.

"Well, now, Jerry, this is too bad, I do declare. Come, take it off again, that's a good fellow."

"Mr. Prose," said the quarter-master, "the first-lieutenant wants you on deck directly."

"There, now, Jerry, what a mess I might have been in. Where's the key?"

"I have not got it," replied Jerry; "the

captain saw me on the quarter-deck, and took the bunch of keys away with him."

"What! is the captain gone away? I do declare, now, this is too bad," cried Prose, in a rage.

"Too bad!—why, man, don't be angry—it's a distinction. Between me and the first-lieutenant, you are created a knight of the *Grand Cross*. I gave you the *collar*, and he has given you the *order*, which I recommend you to comply with, without you wish further elevation—to the mast-head."

"Mr. Prose, the first-lieutenant wants you, immediately," said the quarter-master, who had been despatched to him again.

"Why, how can I go up with a dog's collar round my neck?"

"I'm sorry, very sorry, indeed, Prose. Never mind—say it was me."

"Say it was you! Why, so it was you. I'd better say that I'm sick."

"Yes, that will do. What shall your com-

plaint be?—a *lock-jaw*? I'll go up and tell Mr. Bully—shall I?”

“Do—tell him I'm not well.”

Jerry went up accordingly. “Mr. Prose is not well, Sir—he has a sort of lock-jaw.”

“I wish to God you had the same complaint, Sir,” replied the first-lieutenant, who owed him one. “Macallan, is Mr. Prose ill?”

“Not that I know of; he has not applied to me. I'll go down and see him before I go on shore.”

Macallan came up laughing, but he recovered his seriousness before Bully perceived it.

“Well, doctor.”

“Mr. Prose is certainly not very fit to come on deck in his present state,” said Macallan, who then descended the side, and the boat which had been waiting for him shoved off. But, this time, Jerry was caught in his own trap.

“Mr. J——, where is the dog's collar?—it

must be oiled and cleaned," said the first-lieutenant.

"Shall I give it to the armourer, Sir?" replied Jerry.

"No, bring it up to me."

Jerry went down, and returned in a few minutes. "I cannot find it, Sir; I left it in the berth when I came on deck."

"That's just like your usual carelessness, Mr. J——. Now go up to the mast-head, and stay there till I call you down."

Jerry, who did not like the turn which the joke had taken, moved up with a very reluctant step—at the rate of about one rattling in ten seconds.

"Come, Sir, what are you about?—*start up*."

"I'm no *up-start*, Sir," replied Jerry to the first-lieutenant—a sarcasm which hit so hard, that Jerry was not called down till dark; and long after Prose had, by making interest with the captain's steward, obtained the keys, and released his neck from its enthrallment.

The party in the second boat were landed on the reef, and while the rest were attending to the survey, Macallan was employed in examining the crevices of the rocks, and collecting the different objects of natural history which presented themselves.

The boat was sent on board, as it was not required until the afternoon, when the gun-room officers were to return to dinner.

The captain's gig remained on shore, and the coxswain was employed by Macallan in receiving from him the different shells, and varieties of coral, with which the rocks were covered.

"Take particular care of this specimen," said the surgeon, as he delivered a bunch of corallines into the hands of Marshall, the coxswain.

"I ax your pardon, Mr. Macallan, — but what's the good of picking up all this rubbish?"

"Rubbish!" replied the surgeon, laughing—"why, you don't know what it is. What do you think those are which I just gave you?"

“Why, weeds are rubbish, and these be only pieces of sea-weed.”

“They happen to be *animals*.”

“*Hanimals!*” cried the coxswain, with an incredulous smile; “well, Sir, I always took ’em to be *weggittables*. We live and larn, sure enough. Are cabbage and *hingions hanimals* too?”

“No,” replied the surgeon, much amused, “they are not, Marshall; but these are. Now, take them to the boat, and put them in a safe place, and then come back.”

“I say, Bill, lookye here,” said the coxswain to one of the sailors, who was lying down on the thwarts of the boat, holding up the coral to him in a contemptuous manner—“what the hell d’ye think this is? Why, its a hanimal!”

“A what?”

“I’ll be blowed if the doctor don’t say its a hanimal!”

“No more a hanimal than I am,” replied the

sailor, laying his head down again on the thwarts, and shutting his eyes.

In a few minutes Marshall returned to the surgeon, who, tired with clambering over the rocks, was sitting down to rest himself a little. "Well, Marshall, I hope you have not hurt what I gave into your charge."

"Hurt 'em!—why, Sir, a'ter what you told me, I'd as soon have hurt a cat."

"What, you are superstitious on that point, as seamen generally are."

"Super — what, Mr. Macallan? I only knows, that they who ill-treats a cat, comes worst off. I've proof positive of that since I have been in the service. I could spin you a yarn."

"Well, now, Marshall, pray do. Come, sit down here—I am fond of proof positive. Now, let me hear what you have to say, and I'll listen without interrupting you."

The coxswain took his seat as Macallan desired, and taking the quid of tobacco out of his

cheek, and laying it down on the rock beside him, commenced as follows:—

“ Well, now, d’ye see, Mr. Macallan, I’ll just exactly tell you how it was, and then I leaves you to judge whether a cat’s to be sarved in that way. It was when I belonged to the *Survellanty* frigate, that we were laying in Cawsand Bay, awaiting for sailing orders. We hadn’t dropped the anchor more than a week, and there was no liberty ashore. Well, Sir, the purser found out that his steward was a bit of a rascal, and turns him adrift. The ship’s company knew that long afore; for it was not a few that he had cheated, and we were all glad to see him and his traps handed down the side. Now, Sir, this here fellow had a black cat—but it warn’t at all like other cats. When it was a kitten, they had cut off his tail close to his starn, and his ears had been shaved off just as close to his figure-head, and the hanimal used to set up on his hind legs and fight like a rabbit. It had quite lost its natur, as it were,

and looked for all the world like a little imp of darkness. It always lived in the purser's steward's room, and we never seed him but when we went down for the biscuit and flour as was sarving out.

“Well, Sir, when this rascal of a steward leaves the ship, he had no natural affection for his cat, and he leaves him on board, belonging to nobody; and the steward as comes in his place, turns him out of the steward's room; so the poor jury-rigged little devil had to take care of itself.

“We all tried to coax it into one berth or the other, but the poor brute wouldn't take to nobody. You know, Sir, a cat doesn't like to change, so he wandered about the ship, mewing all day, and thieving all night. At last, he takes to the master's cabin, and makes a dirt there, and the master gets very savage, and swears that he'll kill him, if ever he comes athwart him.

“Now, Sir, you knows its the natur of cats

always to make a dirt in the same place,—reason why, God only knows; and so this poor black devil always returns to the master's cabin, and makes it, as it were, his head-quarters. At last the master, who was as even-tempered an officer as ever I sailed with, finds one day that his sextant case is all of a smudge: so being touched in a sore place, he gets into a great rage, and orders all the boys of the ship to catch the cat; and after much ado, the poor cat was caught, and brought aft into the gun-room. 'Now, then, P——,' said the master to the first-lieutenant, 'will you help kill the dirty beast?'—and the first-lieutenant, who cared more about his lower deck being clean than fifty human beings' lives, said he would; so they called for the sargant o' marines, and orders him to bring up two ship's muskets and some ball cartridge, and they goes on deck with the cat in their arms.

"Well, Sir, when the men saw the cat brought up on deck, and hears that he was to be hove overboard, they all congregates toge-

ther upon the lee-gangway, and gives their opinions on the subject, — and one says, ‘Let’s go and speak to the first-lieutenant;’ and another says, ‘He’ll put you in the black list;’ and so they don’t do nothing—all except Jenkins, the boatswain’s-mate, who calls to a waterman out of the main-deck-port, and says, ‘Waterman,’ says he, ‘when they heaves that cat overboard, do you pick him up, and I’ll give you a shilling;’ and the waterman said, as how he would, for you see, Sir, the men didn’t know that the musquets had been ordered up to shoot the poor beast.

“Well, Sir, the waterman laid off on his oars, and the men, knowing what Jenkins had done, were content. But when the sargant o’ marines comes up, and loads the musquets with ball cartridges, then the men begins to grumble; howsomever, the master throws the cat overboard off the lee-quarter, and the waterman, as soon as he sees her splash in the water, backs astarn to take her into the boat, but the

first-lieutenant tells him to get out of the way, if he doesn't want a bullet through his boat—so he pulls ahead again. The master fires first, and hits the cat a clip on the neck, which turns her half over, and the first-lieutenant fires his musquet, and cuts the poor hanimal right in half by the backbone, and she sprawls a bit, and then goes down to the bottom. 'Capital shots both,' says the first-lieutenant; 'he'll never take an observation of your sextant again, master;' and they both laughs heartily, and goes down the ladder to get their dinner.

"Well, Sir, I never seed a ship's company in such a farment, or such a nitty kicked up 'tween decks, in my life: it was almost as bad as a mutiny; but they piped to grog soon a'ter, and the men goes to their berths and talks the matter over more coolly, and they all agrees that no good would come to the ship a'ter that, and very melancholy they were, and couldn't forget it.

"Well, Sir, our sailing orders comes down

the next day, and the first cutter is sent on shore for the captain, and six men out of ten leaves the boat, and I'm sure that it warn't for desartion, but all along of that cat being hove overboard and butchered in that way—for three on 'em were messmates of mine—for you know, Sir, we talks them matters over, and if they had had a mind to quit the sarvice, I should have know'd it. The captain was as savage as a bear with a sore head, and did nothing but growl for three days a'terwards, and it was well to keep clear on him, for he snapped right and left, like a mad dog. I never seed him in such a humor afore, except once when we had a fortnight's foul wind.

“Well, Sir, we had been out a week, when we falls in with a large frigate, and beats to quarters. We expected her to be a Frenchman ; but as soon as she comes within gun-shot, she hoists the private signal, and proves to be the *Semiramus*, and our senior officer. The next morning, cruising together, we sees a vessel

in shore, and the Semiramus stands in on the larboard-tack, and orders us by signal to keep away, and prevent his running along the coast. The vessel, finding that she couldn't go no way, comes to an anchor under a battery of two guns—and then the commodore makes the signal for boats manned and armed, to cut her out.

“ Well, Sir, our first-lieutenant was in his cot, on his beam-ends, with the rheumatiz, and couldn't go on service; so the second and third-lieutenants, and master, and one of the midshipmen, had command of our four boats, and the commodore sent seven of his'n. The boats pulled in, and carried the vessel in good style, and there never was a man hurt. As many boats as could clap on took her in tow, and out she came at the rate of four knots an hour. I was coxswain of the pinnace, which was under the charge of the master, and we were pulling on board as all the boats weren't wanted to tow—and we were about three cables' lengths ahead of the

vessel, when I sees her ground upon a rock, that nobody knows nothing about, on the star-board-side of the entrance of the harbour ; and I said that she were grounded to the master, who orders us to pull back to the vessel to assist 'em in getting her off again.

“ Well, Sir, we gets alongside of her, and finds that she was off again—having only grazed the rock, and the boats towed her out again with a rally. Now the Frenchmen were firing at us with musquets, for we had shut in the battery, and as we were almost out of musquet shot, the balls only pitted in the water, without doing any harm—and I was a-standing with the master on the starn-sheets, my body being just between him and the beach where they were a-firing from. It seemed mortally impossible to hit him, except through me. Howsomever, a bullet passes between my arm—just here, and my side, and striked him dead upon the spot. There warn't another man hit out of nine boats' crews, and I'll leave you to guess whether the

sailors didn't declare that he got his death all along of murdering the cat.

“ Well, Sir, the men thought as he had *fired first*, that now all was over; only Jenkins, the boatswain's mate, said, ‘ That he warn't quite sure of that.’ We parts company with the commodore the next day, and the day a'ter as it turned out, we falls in with a French frigate. She had the heels of us, and kept us at long balls, but we hoped to cut her off from running into Brest, if a slant o' wind favoured us—and obligating her to fight, whether or no, Tom Collins. The first-lieutenant was still laid up in his cot with the rheumaticks, but when he hears of a French frigate, he gets up, and goes on deck; but when he gets there, he tips us a faint, and falls down on the carronade slide, and his hat rolled off his head into the waist. He tried, but he was so weak that he couldn't get up on his sticks again.

“ Well, Sir, the captain goes up to him, and says something about zeal and all that, and

tells him he must go below again because he's quite incapable, and orders the men at the foremast carronades, to take him to his cot. Now, Sir, just as we were a handing him down the ladder, for I was captain of the gun, a shot comes in at the second port, and takes off his skull as he lays in our arms, and never hurts another man. He was dead in no time; and what was more cur'ous, it was the only shot that hit the frigate. The Frenchman got into Brest—so it was no action after all.

“ So, you see, Mr. Macallan, in two *scrum-mages* only two men were killed out of hundreds, and they were the two who had killed the cat! Now, that's what I calls proof positive, for I seed it all with my own eyes; and I should like to know whether you could do the same, with regard to that thing being a *hanimal* ?”

“ I will, Marshall; to-morrow you shall see that with your own eyes.”

“To-morrow come never!” muttered the coxswain, replacing the quid of tobacco in his cheek.

* The phraseology of sailors has been so caricatured of late, that I am afraid my story will be considered as translated into English. Seamen, however, must decide which is correct.

CHAPTER VII.

And, lo ! while he was expounding, in set terms, the most abstruse of his pious doctrines, the head of the tub whereon the good man stood, gave way, and the preacher was lost from before the eyes of the whole congregation.

Life of the REV. MR. SMITH, S.S.

SEYMOUR, who was always the companion of Captain M——, whenever either instruction or amusement was to be gained, now quitted the surveying party to join Macallan, who still continued seated on the rocks, reflecting upon the remarkable coincidence which the coxswain had narrated, sufficient in itself to confirm the superstitious ideas of the sailors for

another century. His thoughts naturally reverted to the other point, in which sea-faring men are equally bigotted, the disastrous consequences of "sailing on a Friday;" the origin of which superstition can easily be traced to early Catholicism, when, out of respect for the day of universal redemption, they were directed by their pastors to await the "morrow's sun." "Thus," mentally exclaimed Macallan, "has religion degenerated into superstition; and that which, from the purity of its origin, would have commanded our respect, is now only deserving of our contempt. It is by the motives that have produced them, that our actions must be weighed. That which once was an offering of religious veneration and love, is now a tribute to superstition and to fear. Well, Seymour," said he, addressing his companion, "how do you like surveying?"

"Not much; the sun is hot, and the glare so powerful that I am almost blind. What a pity it is that we had not some trees here, to

shade us from the heat. I should like to plant some for the benefit of those who may come after us."

"A correct feeling on your part, my boy; but no trees would grow here at present—there is no soil."

"There is plenty of some sort or other, in the part where we have been surveying."

"Yes, the sand thrown up by the sea, and the particles of shells and rock, which have been triturated by the wave, or decomposed by the alternate action of the elements; but there is no vegetable matter, without which there can be no vegetable produce. Observe, Willy—the skeleton of this earth is framed of rocks and mountains, which have been proudly rearing their heads into the clouds, or lying in dark majesty beneath the seas, since the creation of the world, when they were fixed by the Almighty architect, to remain till time shall be no more. Over them, we find the wrecks of a former world—once as beautiful,

as thickly peopled, but more thoughtless and more wicked than the present—which was hurled into one general chaos, and its component, but incongruous parts, amalgamated in awful mockery by the deluge—that tremendous evidence of the wrath of Heaven. But it has long passed away ; and o'er the relics of former creation, o'er the kneaded mass of man in his pride, of woman in her beauty, of arts in their splendor, of vice in her zenith, and of virtue in her tomb, we are standing upon another, teeming with life and yielding forth her fruits in the season as before. But, Willy, the supports of life are not to be found in primeval rocks or antediluvial remains. It is from the superficial covering, the thin crust with which the earth is covered, composed of the remains of former existence, of the brescia of exhausted nature, that animal creation derives its support ; and it is the grand axiom of the universe, that *animal life can only be supported by animal remains*. From the meanest insect

that crawls upon the ground, to man in his perfection, life is supported and continued by animal and vegetable food; and it is only the decayed matter returned to the earth, which enables the lofty cedar to extend its boughs, or the lowly violet to exhale its perfume. This is a world of eternal reproduction and decay—one endless cycle of the living preying on the dead—a phoenix, yearly, daily, and hourly springing from its ashes, in renewed strength and beauty. The blade of grass, which shoots from the soil, flowers, casts its seed, and dies, to make room for its offspring, nourished by the relics of its parent, is a type of the neverchanging law, controlling all nature, even to man himself, who must pass away to make room for the generation which is to come.”

The boat, which, returning from the ship, appeared like a black speck on the water, indicated that the dinner hour was at hand; and Price and the purser, who had come on shore

with Macallan, now joined him and Willy, who were sitting down on the rocks at the water's edge.

"Well, Macallan," said Price, "it's a fine thing to be a philosopher. What is that which Milton says? Let me see!—sweet—something—divine philosophy—I forget the exact words. Well, what have you caught?"

"If you've caught nothing, Doctor, you're better off than I am," said the purser, wiping his brow, "for I've caught a head-ache."

"I have been very well amused," replied Macallan.

"Ay, I suppose, like what's-his-name in the forest—you recollect?"

"No, indeed I do not."

"Don't you? Bless my soul—you know, sermons in stones, and good in everything. I forget how the lines run. Don't you recollect, O'Keefe?" continued Price, speaking loud in the purser's ear.

"No, I never *collect*. I don't understand

these things," replied the purser, taking his seat by Macallan, and addressing him—"I cannot think what pleasure there can be in poking about the rocks as you do."

"It serves to amuse me, O'Keefe."

"*Abuse* you, my dear fellow! Indeed I never meant it—I beg your pardon—you mistook me."

"It was my fault. I did not speak sufficiently loud. Make no apology."

"Too *proud* to make an apology!—No, indeed—I only asked what amusement you could find?—that's all."

"What amusement?" replied Macallan, rising from his seat, annoyed at these repeated attacks from all quarters upon his favourite study. "Listen to me, and I will explain to you how investigation is the parent of both amusement and instruction. What is this rock that I am standing on? Has it remained here for ages to be dashed by the furious ocean?—or has it lately sprung from the depths, from the silent

labour of the indefatigable zoophites? Look at its sides, behold the variety of marine vegetation with which it is loaded. Are they of the class of the *ulvæ*, *confervæ*, or *fuci*?—to be welcomed as old acquaintance, or, hitherto unnoticed, to be added to the catalogue of Nature's endless stores? And what are those corals, that, like mimic tenants of the forest, extend their graceful boughs? Look at the variety of shells which are adhering to its sides. Observe the *patellæ*—with what tenacity they cling to save themselves from being washed into the deep water, and being devoured by the fishes that are playing in its chasms! What a source of endless amusement, what a field for deep reflection, is there in the investigation of this *one little rock*! When you contemplate the instinct of the different species, the powers given to them, so adapted to their wants and their privations,—is not the eye delighted, is not the mind enlarged, and are not the feelings harmonized? Study the works of the creation,

and you turn a desert into a peopled city—a barren rock into a source of admiration and delight. Nay, search into Nature for a few minutes, and you rise a better man. Dive into—”

What the conclusion of the doctor's rhapsody may have been, is not known; for, stamping too energetically upon the sea-weed on the edge of the rock, his foot slipped, and he disappeared, with the perpendicular descent and velocity of a deep-sea lead, into the water alongside of it.

Marshall, the coxswain, who had been astonished at his speech, to which he had listened with mouth open for want of comprehension, quite forgot the respect due to an officer, at this unexpected finale.

“Watch there, watch!” cried the man, and then threw himself down, and rolled in convulsions of laughter. Price and Willy, whose mirth was almost as excessive, did however, run to his assistance, and caught him by the collar as he rose again to the surface, for it was con-

siderably out of his depth ; while the deaf purser, whose eyes had been fixed on the ground, in deep attention to catch the doctor's words, and whose ears were not sufficiently acute to hear the splash, looked up as they were going to his assistance, and asked, with surprise, " Where's the doctor ? "

The sides of the rock were so slippery, that the united efforts of Price and Seymour (whose powers were much enfeebled from extreme mirth) were not sufficient to haul Macallan upon terra firma—" Marshall, come here directly, Sir, and help us," cried Willy,—an order which the coxswain, who was sufficiently recovered, immediately obeyed.

" Give me your hand, Mr. Macallan," said the man, as the surgeon was clinging to the seaweed ; " its no use holding on by them slippery *hanimals*. Now then, Mr. Price—all together."

" Ay, and as soon as you please," called out the malicious boat-keeper of the gig—" I seed a large shark but a minute ago."

“Quick—Quick!” roared the surgeon, who already imagined his leg encircled by the teeth of the ravenous animal.

By their united efforts, Macallan was at last safely landed—and, after much sputtering, blowing, and puffing, was about to address the coxswain in no very amicable manner, when the purser interrupted him.

“By the powers, doctor, but you took the right way to have a close examination of all those fine things which you were giving us a catalogue of; but now give us the remainder of your speech—you gave us a practical illustration of diving.”

“What kind of sensation was it, doctor?” said Price. “You recollect Shakspeare—and ‘O, methinks what pain it was to drown’—Let me see—something—”

“Pray don’t tax your memory, Price; it’s something like our country,—past all further taxation.”

“That’s the severest thing you’ve said since

we've sailed together. You're out of humour, doctor. Well, you know what Shakspeare says : ' There never yet was found a philosopher'— something about the tooth-ache I forget the words."

These attacks did not at all tend to restore the equanimity of the doctor's temper, which, it must be acknowledged, had some excuse for being disturbed by the events of the morning ; but he proved himself a wise man, for he made no further reply. The boat pulled in, and the party returned on board ; and when Macallan had divested himself of his uncomfortable attire, and joined his messmates at the dinner table, he had recovered his usual serenity of disposition, and joined himself in the laugh which had been created at his expense.

CHAPTER VIII.

A man must serve his time to every trade
Save censure,—critics all are ready made.
Take hacknied jokes from Miller, got by rote,
With just enough of learning to misquote ;
A mind well skill'd to find or forge a fault,
A turn for punning—call it Attic salt :
Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a lucky hit,
Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit ;
Care not for feeling,—pass your proper jest,
And stand a critic !

BYRON.

THE survey was continued. One morning, after a fatiguing walk from point to point, occasionally crossing from one islet to the others in the boats, the party collected under a projecting rock, which screened them from the rays of the vertical sun, and the repast, which had been brought from the ship in the morning, was

spread before them. The party consisted of Captain M——; Pearce, the master; the surgeon, who had accompanied them to explore the natural productions of the reef; and the confidential clerk of Captain M——, a man of the name of Collier, who had been many years in his service, and who was now employed in noting down the angles taken with the theodolite.

Tired with the labours of the morning, Captain M—— did not rise immediately after their meal had been despatched, but entered into conversation with the surgeon, who was looking over the memoranda which he had made relative to the natural history of the reef.

“Do you intend to write a book, Mr. Macallan, that you have collected so many remarks?”

“Indeed, I do not, Sir. I have no ambition to be an author.”

The clerk, who was very taciturn in general, and seldom spoke unless on points connected

with his duty, joined the conversation by addressing the surgeon.

“It’s a service of danger, Sir, and you must be prepared to meet the attacks both of authors and reviewers.”

“Of reviewers I can imagine,” replied Macallan; “but why of authors?”

“That depends very much whether you tread over beaten ground, or strike into a new path. In the latter case you will be pretty safe from both, as the authors will be *indifferent*, and the reviewers, in all probability, *incapable*.”

“And why, if I enter upon a beaten track, which, I presume, infers a style of writing in which others have preceded me?”

“Because, Sir, when a new author makes his appearance, he is much in the same situation as a strange dog entering a kennel pre-occupied by many others. He is immediately attacked and worried by the rest, until, either by boldly defending himself, or pertinaciously refusing to quit, he eventually obtains a domiciliation, and

becomes an acknowledged member of the fraternity."

"Why, Mr. Collier," observed the captain, "you seem to be quite *au fait* as to literary arrangements."

"I ought to be, Sir," replied the clerk, "for, in the course of my life, I have attempted to become an author, and practised as a reviewer."

"Indeed! And did you fail in your attempt at authorship?"

"My work was never printed, Sir, for no bookseller would undertake to publish it. I tried the whole town; no man would give himself the trouble to look over the MS. It was said that the public taste was not that way, and that it would not do. At last I received a letter of introduction from an old acquaintance to his uncle, who was a literary character. He certainly did read some parts of my performance."

"And what then?"

"Why, Sir, he shook his head—told me with a sneer that, as an author, I should never

succeed ; but, he added, with a sort of encouraging smile, that, from some parts of the MS. which he had perused, he thought that he could find employment for me in the reviewing line, if I chose to undertake it.

“ My pride was hurt, and I answered that I could not agree with him, as I considered that it required the ability to write a book yourself, to enable you to decide upon the merits of others.”

“ Well, I must say that I agree with you,” replied the captain. “ Proceed in your story, for I am interested.”

“ My friend answered,—‘ By no means, my dear Sir ; a *d——d bad author* generally makes a *very good reviewer*. Indeed, Sir, to be candid with you, I never allow any gentleman to review for me, unless he has met with a misfortune similar to your’s. It is one of the necessary qualifications of a good reviewer that he should have failed as an author : for without the exacerbated feelings arising from disappoint-

ment, he would not possess gall sufficient for his task, and his conscience would stand in his way when he is writing against it, if he were not spurred on by the keen probes of envy.’”

“And he convinced you?”

“My poverty did, Sir, if he did not. I worked many months for him ; but I had better have earned my bread as a common labourer.”

“Reviews ought to pay well, too,” observed Macallan ; “they are periodicals in great demand.”

“They are so,” replied Captain M—— ; “and the reasons are obvious. Few people take the trouble to think for themselves ; but, on the contrary, are very glad to find others who will think for them. Some cannot find time to read—others will not find it. A review removes all these difficulties—gives the busy world an insight into what is going on in the literary world—and enables the loungeur not to appear wholly ignorant of a work, the merits of which may happen to be discussed. But what is the con-

sequence? That seven-eighths of the town are led by the nose by this or that periodical work, having wholly lost sight of the fact, that reviews are far from being gospel. Indeed I do not know any set of men so likely to err as reviewers. In the first place, there is no class of people so irascible, so full of party feeling, so disgraced by envy, as authors: hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness seem to preside over science. Their political opinions step in, and increase the undue preponderance; and, to crown all, they are more influenced by money, being proverbially more in want of it than others. How, then, is it to be expected that reviews can be impartial? I seldom read them myself, as I consider that it is better to know nothing than to be misled."

"And, if it is a fair question, Mr. Collier," continued Captain M——, "in what manner were you employed?"

"I am almost ashamed to tell you, Sir—I was a mere automaton, a machine, in the hands

of others. A new publication was sent to me, with a private mark from my employer, directing the quantum of praise or censure which it was to incur. If the former were allotted to it, the best passages were selected; if condemned to the latter, all the worst. The connecting parts of review were made up from a commonplace book, in which, by turning to any subject, you found the general heads and extracts from the work of others, which you were directed to alter, so as to retain the ideas, but disguise the style, that it might appear original."

"Are you aware of the grounds of praise or abuse?—for it appears that those who directed the censure did not read the publications."

"The grounds were various. Books printed by a bookseller, to whom my master had a dislike, were sure to be run down; on the contrary, those published by his connexions or friends, were as much applauded. Moreover, the influence of authors, who were afraid of a

successful rival in their own line, often d——d a work.”

“But you do not mean to say that all reviews are conducted with such want of principle?”

“By no means. There are many very impartial and clever critiques. The misfortune is, that unless you read the work that is reviewed, you cannot distinguish one from the other.”

“And pray what induced you to abandon this creditable employment?”

“A quarrel, Sir. I had reviewed a work, with the private mark of approval, when it was found out to be a mistake, and I was desired to review it with censure. I expected to be paid for the second review as well as for the first. My employer thought proper to consider it all as one job, and refused—so we parted.”

“Pretty tricks in trade, indeed!” replied Captain M——. “Why, Mr. Collier, you appear to have belonged to a gang of literary bravos, whose pens, like stilettoes, were always ready to stab, in the dark, the unfortunate indi-

viduals who might be pointed out to them by interest or revenge."

"I acknowledge the justice of your remark, Sir; all that I can offer in my defence is, the excuse of the libeller to Cardinal Richelieu—*'Il faut vivre, Monsieur.'*"

"And I answer you, with the Cardinal—*'Je ne vois pas la nécessité,'*" replied Captain M——, with a smile, as he rose to resume his labours.

CHAPTER IX.

He fell, and, deadly pale,
Groaned out his soul.

MILTON.

“Do, mamma, come here,” said Emily, as she was looking out of the window of an inn on the road, where they had stopped to take some refreshment—“do come, and see what a pretty lady is in the chariot which has stopped at the door.”

Mrs. Rainscourt complied with her daughter's request, and acknowledged the justice of

the remark when she saw the expressive countenance of Susan (now Mrs. McElvina), who was listening to the proposal of her husband that they should alight and partake of some refreshment. Susan consented, and was followed by old Hornblow, who, pulling out his watch from his white cassimere *femoralia*, which he had continued to wear ever since the day of the wedding, declared that they must stop to dine.

“ This country air makes one confoundedly hungry,” said the old man ; “ I declare I never had such an appetite in Cateaton Street. Susan, my dear, order something that won't take long in cooking—a beef-steak, if they have nothing down at the fire.”

Mrs. Rainscourt, who was as much prepossessed with the appearance of McElvina as with that of his wife, gave vent to her thoughts with “ I wonder who they are !” Her maid, who was in the room, took this as a hint to obtain the gratification of her mistress's

curiosity as well as her own, and proceeded accordingly on her voyage of discovery. In a few minutes she returned, having boarded the *Abigail* of Mrs. McElvina just as she was coming to an anchor inside the bar; and, having made an interchange of intelligence, with a rapidity incredible to those who are not aware of the velocity of communication between this description of people, re-entered the parlour, to make a report to her commanding officer, precisely at the same moment that Susan's maid was delivering her cargo of intelligence to her own mistress.

"They are a new married couple, Ma'am, and their name is McElvina," said the one.

"The lady is a Mrs. Rainscourt, and the young lady is her daughter, and a great heiress," whispered the other.

"They have purchased the hunting box close to the —— Hall, and are going there now," said the first.

“ They live at the great park, close to where you are going, Ma’am,” said the second.

“ The old gentleman’s name is Hornblow. He is the lady’s father, and as rich as a Jew, they say,” continued Mrs. Rainscourt’s maid.

“ Mrs. Rainscourt don’t live with her husband, Ma’am ; by all accounts he’s a bad ’un,” continued the Abigail of Susan.

The publicity of the staircase of a hôtel is very convenient for making an acquaintance ; and it happened that, just after these communications had been made, Emily was ascending the stairs as Mrs. M^cElvina was going down to join her husband and father at the dinner table. The smiling face and beaming eyes of Emily, who evidently lingered to be spoken to, were so engaging that she soon found her way into the room which the M^cElvins were occupying.

Mrs. Rainscourt was not sorry to find that she was to have for neighbours a couple whose appearance had so prepossessed her in their

favour. As she expected that her society would be rather confined, she did not suffer to escape the favourable opportunity which presented itself of making their acquaintance. As they were returning to their vehicles, Emily ran to Mrs. McElvina to wish her good by, and Mrs. Rainscourt expressed her thanks for the notice they had taken of her daughter. A few minutes conversation ended in "hoping to have the pleasure of making their acquaintance as soon as they were settled."

The carriages drove off, and we shall follow that of the McElvins, which arrived at its destination late in the evening, without any accident.

The cottage-ornée (as all middle-sized houses with verandas and French windows are now designated), which Hornblow had purchased, was, for a wonder, quite as complete as described in the particulars of sale. It had the sloping lawn in front; the three acres (more or less) of plantation and pleasure ground, taste-

fully laid out, and planted with thriving young trees the; capital walled garden, stocked with the choicest fruit trees, in full bearing; abundant springs of the finest water; stabling for six horses; cow-house, cart-house, farm-yard, and *complete piggery*. The dimensions of the conservatory, and rooms in the interior of the house, were quite correct; and the land attached to it was according to the "accompanying plan," and divided into parcels, designated by the rural terms of "Homestead," "Lob's-pound," "Eight-acre meadow," "Little-orchard field," &c. &c.

In short, it was a very eligible purchase, and a very pretty and retired domicile; and when our party arrived, the flowers seemed to yield a more grateful perfume, the trees appeared more umbrageous, and the verdure of the meadows of a more refreshing green, from the contrast with so many hours travelling upon a dusty road, during a sultry day.

“ Oh, how beautiful these roses are ! Do look, my dear father.”

“ They are indeed,” replied old Hornblow, delighted at the happy face of his daughter ;—
“ but I should like some tea, Susan—I am not used to so much jumbling. I feel tired, and shall go to bed early.”

Tea was accordingly prepared ; soon after which, the old gentleman rose to retire.

“ Well,” said he, as he lighted his chamber candle, “ I suppose I am settled here for life ; but I hardly know what to do with myself. I must make acquaintance with all the flowers and all the trees : the budding of the spring will make me think of grandchildren ; the tree, clothed in its beauty, of you ; and the fall of the leaf, of myself. I must count the poultry, and look after the pigs, and see the cows milked. I was fond of the little parlour in Cateaton Street, because I had sat in it so long ; and I suppose that I shall get fond of this place too, if I find enough to employ and

amuse me. But you must be quick and give me a grandchild, Susan, and then I shall nurse him all day long. Good night—God bless you, my dear, good night.”

“ Good night, my dear Sir,” replied Susan, who had coloured deeply at the request which he had made.

“ Good night, M^cElvina, my boy ; this is the first night we pass under this roof ; may we live many happy years in it ;” and old Hornblow left the room, and ascended the stairs.

M^cElvina had encircled Susan’s waist with his arm, and was probably about to utter some wish in unison with that of her father’s, when the noise of a heavy fall sounded in their ears.

“ Good Heaven !” cried Susan, “ it is my father who has fallen down stairs.”

M^cElvina rushed out ; it was but too true. The stair-carpet had not yet been laid down, and his foot had slipped at the uppermost step. He was taken up senseless, and when medical

advice was procured, his head and his spine were found to be seriously injured. In a few days, during which he never spoke, old Hornblow was no more.

Thus the old man, like the prophet of old, after all his toiling, was but permitted to see the promised land; and thus are our days cut short at the very moment of realizing our most sanguine expectations.

Reader, let us look at home. Shall I, now thoughtlessly riding upon the agitated billow, with but one thin plank between me and death, and yet so busy with this futile work, be permitted to bring it to a close? The hand which guides the flowing pen may to-morrow be stiff, the head now teaming with its subject, may be past all thought ere to-morrow's sun is set—ay, sooner! And you, reader, who may so far have had the courage to proceed in the volumes without throwing them away, shall you be permitted to finish your more trifling task?—or, before its

close, be hurried from this transitory scene, where fiction ends, and the spirit, re-endowed, will be enabled to raise its eyes upon the lightening beams of unveiled truth ?

CHAPTER X.

And if you chance his shipp to borde,
This counsel I must give withall.

Ballad of SIR ANDREW BARTON, 1550.

Discretion

And hardy vavour are the twins of honour,
And, nurs'd together, make a conqueror ;
Divided, but a talker.

BEAUMONT *and* FLETCHER.

THE survey having been completed, Captain M —, in pursuance of the orders which he had received, weighed his anchor, and proceeded to cruise until the want of provisions and water should compel him to return into port. For many days the look-out men at the mast-heads were disappointed in their hopes of reporting a strange sail, the chase or capture of which

would relieve the monotony of constant sky and water, until one Sunday forenoon, as Captain M—— was performing divine service, the man at the mast-head hailed the deck with “A strange sail on the weather-bow!”

The puritan may be shocked to hear that the service was speedily, although decorously closed; but Captain M—— was aware, from the fidgetting of the ship's company upon the capstan bars, on which they were seated, that it would be impossible to regain their attention to the service, even if he had felt inclined to proceed; and he well knew, that any worship of God in which the mind and heart were not engaged, was but an idle ceremony, if not a solemn mockery. The hands were turned up—all sail was made—and in an hour, the stranger was to be seen with the naked eye from the fore-yard.

“What do you make of her, Mr. Stewart?” said the first-lieutenant to him, as he sat aloft with his glass directed towards the vessel.

“A merchant ship, Sir,” in ballast.”

“What did he say, Jerry?” inquired Prose, who stood by him on the gangway.

“A French vessel, deeply laden, Prose.”

“Bravo, Jerry!” said Prose, rubbing his hands. “We shall get some prize-money, I do declare.”

“To be sure we shall. It will give us twenty pounds at least for a midshipman’s share, for her cargo must be sugar and coffee. Only, confound it, one has to wait so long for it. I’ll sell mine, dog-cheap, if any one will buy it. Will you, Prose?”

“Why, Jerry, I don’t much like speculation; but, now, what would you really sell your chance for?”

“I’ll take ten pounds for it. We’re certain to come up with her.”

“Ten pounds! No, Jerry, that is too much. I’ll tell you what, I’ll give you five pounds.”

“Done,” replied Jerry, who was aware that a vessel in ballast would not give him thirty

shillings, if Captain M—— sent her in, which was very unlikely. “Where’s the money?”

“Oh, you must trust to my honour; the first port we go into, I pledge you my word that you shall have it.”

“I don’t doubt your word, or your honour, the least, Prose; but still I should like to have the money in my hand. Could not you borrow it? Never mind—it’s a bargain.”

In two hours the frigate had neared the stranger so as to distinguish her water-line from the deck, and, on hoisting her ensign and pendant, the vessel bore down to her.

“She has hoisted English colours, Sir,” reported Stewart to the captain.

“What, Stewart! did you say that she had hoisted English colours?” inquired Prose, with an anxious face.

“Yes, you booby, I did.”

“Well, now, I do declare,” cried Prose, with dismay, “if I haven’t lost five pounds.”

The vessel ran under the stern of the frigate,

and requested a boat to be sent on board, as she had intelligence to communicate. The boat returned, and acquainted Captain M—— that the vessel had been boarded and plundered by a French privateer schooner, which had committed great depredation in that quarter, and that it was not above eight hours that she had left her, and made sail towards Porto Rico, taking out two merchants, who were passengers.

The boat was immediately hoisted up, and all sail made in the direction of the island, which was not above fifteen leagues distant. As the day closed in, their eyes were gratified by the sight of the schooner, becalmed close in under the land. Perceiving the frigate in pursuit of her, and unable to escape, she came to an anchor in a small and shallow bay, within a cable's length of the beach. Captain M——, having run his ship as close in as the depth of water would permit, which was between two or three miles of her, so as to render her escape impossible, came to an anchor, signifying to his officers his

determination to cut her out with his boats on the ensuing day.

The officers who were to be entrusted with the command of the boats, and the crews which were to be employed on the service, were selected, and mustered on the quarter-deck, previous to the hammocks being piped down, that the former might hold themselves in readiness, and that the latter might remain in their hammocks during the night. All was anxiety for the sun to rise again upon those who were about to venture in the lottery, where the prizes would be honour, and the blanks—death.

There were but few whose souls were of that decided brute composition that they could sleep through the whole of the tedious night. They woke, and “swore a prayer or two, then slept again.” The sun had not yet made his appearance above the horizon, although the eastern blush announced that the spinning earth would shortly whirl the Aspasia into his presence, when the pipes of the boatswain and his mates,

with the summons of "All hands ahoy—up all hammocks!" were obeyed with the alacrity so characteristic of English seamen, anticipating danger. The hammocks were soon stowed, and the hands turned up. "Out boats!" The yard-tackles and stays were hooked, and the larger boats from the booms descended with a heavy splash into the water, which they threw out on each side of them as they displaced it with their weight; while the cutters from the quarter-davits were already lowered down, and were being manned under the chains.

Broad daylight discovered the privateer, who, aware of their intentions, had employed the night in taking every precaution that skill could suggest to repel the expected attack. Secured with cables and hawsers, extending from each bow and quarter—her starboard broadside directed to seaward—her boarding-netting triced up to the lower rigging—and booms, connected together, rigged out from the sides, to prevent them from laying her on board.

There was no wind ; the sea was smooth as glass ; and the French colours, hoisted in defiance at each mast-head, hung listlessly down the spars, as if fainting for the breeze which would expand them in their vigour. She was pierced for eight-ports on a side ; and the guns, which pointed through them, with the tompions out, ready to shower destruction upon her assailants, shewed like the teeth of the snarling wolf, who stands at bay, awaiting the attack of his undaunted pursuers.

The boats had received their guns, which were fixed on slides, so as to enable them to be fired over the bows, without impeding the use of the oars ; the ammunition and arm-chests had been placed in security abaft.

The sailors, with their cutlasses belted round their waists, and a pistol stuck in their girdles, or in a becket at the side of the boat, ready to their hands—the marines, in proportion to the number which each boat could carry, sitting in the stern-sheets, with their musquets between

their legs, and their well pipeclayed belts for bayonet and cartouch box crossed over their old jackets, half dirt, half finery—all was ready for shoving off, when Captain M—— desired the officers whom he had appointed to the expedition to step down into his cabin. Bully, the first-lieutenant, was unwell, with an intermittent fever, and Captain M——, at the request of Macallan, would not accede to his anxiety to take the command. Price, Courtenay, Stewart, and three other midshipmen, were those who had been selected for the dangerous service.

“Gentlemen,” said Captain M——, as they stood round the table in the fore cabin, waiting for his communication, “I must call your attention to a few points, which it is my wish that you should bear in remembrance, now that you are about to proceed upon what will, in all likelihood, prove to be an arduous service. This vessel has already done so much mischief, that I conceive it my duty to capture her if possible: and although

there is no service in which, generally speaking, there is so great a sacrifice of life, in proportion to the object to be obtained, as that which is generally termed 'cutting out,' yet, rather than she should escape, to the further injury of our trade, I have determined to have recourse to the measure.

“ But, gentlemen (and to you, Mr. Price, as commanding the expedition, I particularly address myself), recollect that, even in this extreme case, without proper arrangement, we may not only purchase our victory too dear, but may even sacrifice a number of lives without succeeding in our attempt. Of your courage I have not the least doubt; but let it be remembered, that it is something more than mere animal courage which I expect in the behaviour of my officers. If nothing more were required, the command of these boats might be as safely entrusted to any of the fore-mast men, who, like the bulldogs of our country, will thrust their head into the lion's jaw with perfect indifference.

“What I require, and expect, and will have, from every officer who looks for promotion from my recommendation, is what I term—conduct: by which I would imply, that coolness and presence of mind which enable him to calculate chances in the midst of danger,—to take advantage of a favourable opportunity in the heat of an engagement,—and to restrain the impetuosity of those who have fallen into the dangerous error of despising their enemy. Of such conduct the most favourable construction that can be put upon it is, that it is only preferable to indecision.

“In a service of this description, even with the greatest courage and prudence united, some loss must necessarily be expected to take place, and there is no providing against unforeseen accidents; but if I find that, by rash and injudicious behaviour, a greater sacrifice is made than there is a necessity for, depend upon it that I shall not fail to let that officer know the high value at which I estimate the life of a

British sailor. With this caution I shall now give you my ideas as to what appears the most eligible plan of insuring success. I have made a rough sketch on this paper, which will assist my explanation."

Captain M—— then entered into the plan of attack, pointing out the precautions which should be taken, &c.; and concluded by observing, that they were by no means to consider themselves as fettered by what he had proposed, but merely to regard them as hints to guide their conduct, if found preferable to any others which might be suggested by the peculiarity of the service, and the measures adopted by the enemy. The officers returned on deck, and descended into their respective boats, where they found many of the younger midshipmen, who, although not selected for the service, had smuggled themselves into the boats, that they might be participators in the conflict. Captain M——, although he did not send them on the service, had no objection to

their going, and therefore pretended not to see them when he looked over the side, and desired the boats to shove off. Directly the order was given, the remainder of the ship's company mounted the rigging, and saluted them with three cheers.

The boats' crews tossed their oars while the cheers were given, and returned the same number. The oars again descended into the water, and the armament pulled in for the shore.

CHAPTER XI.

Conquest pursues, where courage leads the way.

GARTH.

THE glasses of Captain M——, and of the officers, who remained on board of the frigate, were anxiously pointed towards the boats, which in less than half an hour had arrived within gun-shot of the privateer. “There is a gun from her,” cried several of the men at the same moment, as the smoke boomed along the smooth water.

The shot dashed up the spray under the bows of the boats, and *ricochetting* over them, disappeared in the wave, about half a mile astern.

The boats, which, previously, had been pulling in all together, and without any particular order, now separated, and formed a line abreast, so that there was less chance of the shot taking effect, than where they were before, *en masse*.

“Very good, Mr. Price,” observed the captain, who had his eye fixed on them, through his glass.

The boats continued their advance towards the enemy, who fired her two long guns, both of which she had brought over to her starboard side, but, though well directed, the shot did not strike any of her assailants.

“There’s grape, Sir,” said the master, as the sea was torn and ploughed up with it close to the launch, which, with the other boats, was now within a hundred yards of the privateer.

"The launch returns her fire," observed Captain M——.

"And there's blaze away from the pinnacle and the barge," cried one of the men, who stood on the ratlings of the main rigging. "Hurrah, my lads! keep it up," continued the man, in his feeling of excitement, which pervading Captain M——, as well as the rest of the crew, received no check, though not exactly in accordance with the strict routine of the service.

The combat now became warm; gun after gun from the privateer was rapidly fired at the boats, who were taking their stations, previous to a simultaneous rush to board.

The pinnacle had pulled away towards the bow of the privateer; the barge had taken up a position on the quarter; the launch remained on her beam, firing round and grape from her eighteen-pounder carronade, with a rapidity that almost enabled her to return gun for gun to her superiorly armed antagonist.

Both the cutters were under her stern, keeping up an incessant fire of musquetry, with which they were now close enough to annoy the enemy.

“A gun from the rock close to the barge, Sir!” reported the signal man.

“I expected as much,” observed Captain M——, to the officers standing near him.

“One of the cutters has winded, Sir; she’s stretching out for the shore,” cried the master.

“Bravo!—that’s decided—and without waiting for orders. Who commands that boat?” inquired Captain M——.

“It’s the first cutter—Mr. Bruce, Sir.”

The cutter was on shore before the gun could be reloaded, and fired a second time. The crew, with the officer at their head, were seen to clamber up the rock! In a minute they returned, and, jumping into the boat, pulled off to give their aid to the capture of the vessel.

“He has spiked the gun, I am certain,” observed Captain M——

Before the cutter could regain her station, the other boats were summoned by the bugle in the launch, and, with loud cheering, pulled up together to the attack. The booms, which had been rigged out to prevent them from coming alongside, already shot through by the grape from the launch, offered but little resistance to the impetus with which the boats were forced against them; they either broke in two, or sank under water.

“There’s *board!*—Hurrah!” cried all the men who remained in the *Aspasia*, cheering those who heard them not.

But I must transport the reader to the scene of slaughter; for if he remains on board of the *Aspasia*, he will distinguish nothing but fire and smoke. Don’t be afraid, ladies, if I take you on board of the schooner—“these our actors are all air, thin air,” raised by the magic pen for your amusement. Come, then, fearlessly,

with me, and view the scene of mortal strife ! The launch has boarded on the starboard gangway, and it is against her that the crew of the privateer have directed their main efforts.

The boarding nettings cannot be divided, and the men are thrown back, wounded or dead, into the boat. The crew of the pinnace are attempting the bows with indifferent success. Some have already fallen a sacrifice to their valour—none have yet succeeded in gaining a footing on the deck, while the marines are resisting, with their bayonets, the thrusts of the boarding pikes which are protruded through the ports. Courtenay has not yet boarded in the barge, for, on pulling up on the quarter, he perceived that, on the larboard side of the vessel, the boarding nettings had either been neglected to be properly triced up, or had been cut away by the fire from the boats. He has pushed alongside, to take advantage of the opening, and the two cutters have followed him. They board with little resistance—the enemy are too busy

repelling the attacks on the other side—and as his men pour upon the privateer's deck, the crews of the launch and pinnace, tired with their vain endeavours to divide the nettings, and rendered desperate by their loss, have run up the fore and main rigging above the nettings, and thrown themselves down, cutlass in hand, into the *mêlée* below, careless of the points of the weapons which may meet them in their descent. Now is the struggle for life or death !

Courtenay, who was as daring as man could be, but not of a very athletic frame, re-climbed from the main chains of the vessel into which he had already once fallen, from one of his own seamen having inadvertently made use of his shoulder as a step to assist his own ascent. He was overtaken by Robinson, the coxswain of the cutter, who sprang up, with all the ardour and activity of an English sailor who “meant mischief,” and, pleased with the energy of his officer (forgetting, at the moment, the respect due to his rank), called out to him, by the *sobri-*

quet with which he had been christened by the men, — “ Bravo, *Little Bilious* ! that’s your sort !”

“ What’s that, Sir ?” cried Courtenay, making a spring, so as to stand on the plane sheer of the vessel at the same moment with the coxswain, and seizing him by the collar,—“ I say, Robinson, what do you mean by calling me ‘ *Little Bilious* ?’ ” continued the lieutenant, wholly regardless of the situation they were placed in. The coxswain looked at him with surprise, and at the same moment parried off with his cutlass a thrust of a pike at Courtenay, which, in all probability, would otherwise have prevented his asking any more questions ; then, without making any answer, sprang down on the deck into the midst of the affray.

“ You, Robinson, come back,” cried Courtenay, after him—“ D—d annoying—*Little Bilious*, indeed !” continued he, as, following the example of the coxswain, he proceeded to vent,

his bile, for the present, on the heads of the Frenchmen.

In most instances of boarding, but more especially in boarding small vessels, there is not much opportunity for what is termed hand to hand fighting. It is a rush for the deck; breast to breast, thigh to thigh, foot to foot, man wedged against man, so pressed on by those behind, that there is little possibility of using your cutlass, except by driving your antagonist's teeth down his throat with the hilt. Gun-shot wounds, of course, take place throughout the whole of the combat, but those from the sabre and the cutlass are generally given and received before the close, or after the resistance of one party has yielded to the pertinacity and courage of the other. The crews of the barge and cutters having gained possession of the deck in the rear of the enemy, the affair was decided much sooner than it otherwise would have been, for the French fought with desperation, and

were commanded by a most gallant and enterprising captain. In three minutes, the crew of the privateer were either beaten below, or forced overboard, and the colours, hauled down from the mast-heads, announced to Captain M—— and the rest of the *Aspasia's* crew, the welcome intelligence that the privateer was in the possession of their gallant shipmates.

The hatches were secured, and the panting Englishmen, for a few minutes, desisted from their exertions, that they might recover their breath; after which, Price gave directions for the cables and hawser to be cut, and the boats to go a-head, and tow the vessel out.

“ They are firing musquetry from the shore; they’ve just hit one of our men,” said the coxswain of the pinnace.

“ Then cast off, and bring your gun to bear astern. If you do not hit them, at least they will not be so steady in their aim. As soon as we are out of musquet-shot, pull out to us.”

The order was executed whilst the other

boats towed the privateer towards the frigate. In a few minutes they were out of musquet shot; the pinnace returned, and they had leisure to examine into the loss which they had sustained in the conflict. The launch had suffered most; nine of her crew were either killed or wounded. Three seamen and four marines had suffered in the other boats. Twenty-seven of the privateer's men were stretched on the decks, either dead or unable to rise. Those who had not been severely hurt had escaped below with the rest of the crew.

Price was standing at the wheel, his sabre not yet sheathed, with Courtenay at his side, when his inveterate habit returned, and he commenced—

“ ‘ I do remember, when the fight was done,’—”

“ So do I, and devilish glad that it's over,” cried Jerry, coming forward from the taffrail with a cutlass in his hand, which, although he

could wield, he could certainly not have done much execution with.

“ Why, how came you here, Mr. Jerry ?” inquired Courtenay.

“ Oh ! Bruce brought me in his boat, with the hopes of getting rid of me ; but I shall live to plague him yet.”

“ You are not hurt, Seymour, I hope ?” said Price to our hero, who now joined the party, and whose clothes were stained with blood.

“ No,” replied Seymour smiling. “ It’s not my blood—it’s Bruce’s. I have been binding up his head ; he has a very deep cut on the forehead, and a musquet ball in his neck ; but I think neither of the wounds is of much consequence.”

“ Where is he ?”

“ In the cutter. I desired them to put the wounded man in her, out of the launch, and to pull on board at once. Was not I right ?”

"Yes, most assuredly. I should have thought of it myself."

"Well, Jerry," said Seymour, laughing, "how many did you—"

"I did not count them; but if you meet with any chaps with deeper wounds than usual, put them down to me. Do you know, Mr. Price, you are more indebted to me than you may imagine for the success of this affair?"

"How, Mr. Jerry? I should like to know, that I may prove my gratitude; 'eleven out of the thirteen' you paid, I've no doubt."

"It was not altogether that—I frightened them more than I hurt them: for when they would have returned the blows from this stalwart arm," said Jerry, holding out the member in question, which was about the thickness of a large carrot, "I immediately turned edgeways to them, and was invisible. They thought that they had to deal with either a ghost or a magician, and, depend upon it, it unnerved them—"

“ ‘Approach thou like’—what is it ?” resumed Price, “ something—‘ Hence, horrible shadow, unreal mockery, hence ! ’ ”

“ Pretty names to be called in reward of my services,” cried Jerry. “ I presume this is a specimen of the gratitude you were talking about. Well, after all, to take a leaf out of your book, Mr. Price, I consider that the better part of valour is discretion. Now, that fellow, Stewart, he actually gave them his head to play with, and I am not sorry that he has had it broken—for I calculate that I shall be saved at least a dozen thrashings by some of his hot blood being let out—‘ the King’s poor cousin ! ’ ”

“ By the by, I quite forgot — where’s Robinson, the coxswain of the cutter ? ” demanded Courtenay.

“ Between the guns forward—seriously hurt, poor fellow, I am afraid,” answered Seymour.

“ I’m very sorry for that—I’ll go and see him—I wish to speak with him,” replied Courtenay, walking forward.

Robinson was lying near the long brass gun, which was pointed out of the foremast port, his head pillowed upon the body of the French captain, who had fallen by his hand, just before he had received his mortal wound. A musquet ball had entered his groin, and divided the iliac artery; he was bleeding to death—nothing could save him. The cold perspiration on his forehead, and the glassy appearance of his eye, too plainly indicated that he had but a few minutes to live. Courtenay, shocked at the condition of the poor fellow, who was not only the most humorous, but one of the ablest seamen in the ship, knelt down on one knee beside him, and took his hand—

“How do you feel, Robinson? are you in much pain?”

“None at all, Sir, thank’ye,” replied the man faintly; “but the purser may chalk me down DD. as soon as he pleases. I suppose he’ll

cheat government out of our day's grub though," continued the man, with a smile.

Courtenay, aware of the truth of the first observation, thought it no kindness to attempt to deceive a dying man with hopes of recovery in his last moments ; he therefore continued—" Can I be of any service to you, Robinson ? Is there anything I can do when you are gone ?"

" Nothing at all, Sir. I've neither chick nor child, nor relation, that I know of. Yes, there is one thing, Sir, but it's on the bloody side ; the key of the mess chest is in my trowsers' pocket—I wish you'd recollect to have it taken out, and given to John Williams ; you must wait till I'm dead, for I can't turn myself just now."

" It shall be attended to," replied Courtenay.

" And, Mr. Courtenay, remember me to the captain."

" Is there anything else ?" continued Courte-

nay, who perceived that the man was sinking rapidly.

“ Nothing—nothing, Sir,” replied Robinson, very faintly. “ Good by, God bless you, Sir, I’m going fast now.”

“ But, Robinson,” said Courtenay, in a low, soothing voice, bending nearer to him, “ tell me, my good fellow—I’m not the least angry—tell me, why did you call me *Little Bilious*?”

The man turned his eyes up to him, and a smile played upon his features, as if he was pleased with the idea of disappointing the curiosity of his officer. He made no answer—his head fell back, and in a few seconds he had breathed his last.

“ Poor fellow—he is gone !” said Courtenay, with a deep sigh, as he rose up from the body —“ Never answered my question too—Well,” continued he, as he walked slowly aft, “ now that’s what I consider to be most excessively annoying.”

By this time, the privateer had been towed

under the stern of the frigate, and a hawser was sent on board to secure her astern. Price and the other officers returned on board, where they were well received by Captain M——, who thanked them for their exertions. The wounded had been some time under the hands of Macallan, and fresh crews having been ordered into the boats, they returned to the privateer. The hatches were taken off, and the prisoners removed to the frigate.

The name of the prize was the Estelle, of two hundred tons burthen, mounting fourteen guns, and having on board, at the commencement of the attack, her full complement of one hundred and twenty-five men.

CHAPTER XII.

Many with trust, with doubt few are undone.

LORD BROOK.

Doubt wisely : in strange way

To stand enquiring right, is not to stray ;

To run wrong, is.

DONNE.

WHEN the hatches were taken off on board of the privateer, the prisoners, as they came up, were handed into the boats. Jerry stood at the hatchway, with his cutlass in his hand, making his sarcastic remarks upon them as they appeared. A short interval had elapsed, after it was supposed that every body had come from below, when a tall, thin personage, in the dress of a landsman, crawled up the hatchway.

“Halloo !” cried Jerry ; “ Mr. Longtogs, who have we here ? Why he must be the *padre*. I say, Mounseer, je very much suspect, que vous êtes what they call a Father Confessor, n'est-ce pas ? Devilish good idea. A privateer with a parson ! What's your pay, Mounseer ?—a tenth, of course. Little enough too for looking after the souls of such a set of d——d rascals. Well, Mounseer, vous êtes prisonnier, without benefit of clergy ; so hop into that boat. Why, confound it, here's another !” continued Jerry, as a second made his appearance. “ He's the clerk, of course, as he follows the parson. Come, Mont'arrico Jack ! What a cock-eye the rascal has !”

During this elegant harangue, which was certainly meant for his own amusement more than for their edification, as Jerry had no idea but that they were belonging to the privateer, and of course could not comprehend him, both the parties looked at him, and at each other, with astonishment, until the first who

had appeared addressed the latter with, "I say, Paul, did you ever see such a thing before? D—n it, why he's like a sixpenny fife,—more noise than substance."

Jerry at once perceived his mistake, and recollected, that the master of the vessel which they had boarded had mentioned that two English merchants had been taken out of her by the privateer, with the hopes of ransom; but, nettled with the remark which had been made, he retorted with,

"Well, I'd recommend you not to attempt to play upon me, that's all."

"No, I don't mean, for I should only make you squeak."

"You are the two gentlemen who were detained by the privateer, I presume," said Pearce, the master, who had come on board to superintend the necessary arrangements previous to her being sent in.

"We are, Sir, and must introduce ourselves. My name is Mr. Peter Capon—that of my

friend, designated by that young gentleman as Cock-eye, is Mr. Paul Contract. Will you oblige us with a boat to go on board of the frigate, that we may speak to the captain?"

"Most certainly. Jump into the first cutter there. I am sorry you have been so unpleasantly situated, gentlemen. Why did not you come on deck before?"

Peter did not state the real ground, which was to secure their property, which was below, from being plundered by the privateer's crew; but, wishing to pay off Jerry for his impertinence, replied,

"Why, we did look up the hatchway several times, but there was something so awful, and, I may say, so un-English-like, in the appearance of that officer, with his drawn sword, that we were afraid; we could not imagine into whose hands the vessel had fallen—we thought it had been captured by the Yahoos."

"Houyhnhnms, more likely. You'll find I'm a bit of a horse," replied Jerry, in a passion.

“By Jove, then, you’re only fit for the hounds,” observed the gentleman with oblique vision; “I should order you—”

“Would you? Well, now I’ll order you, Sir,” replied the youngster, whose anger made him quite forget the presence of his commanding officer—“Have the goodness to step into that boat.”

“And I shall order you, Mr. J——,” observed the master, with asperity—“I order you to go into that boat, and take these gentlemen on board, and to hold your tongue.”

“Ay, ay, Sir. This way, Sir,” said Jerry to Mr. Peter, making him a polite bow, and pointing to the boat at the gangway—“In that direction, Sir, if you please,” continued Jerry, bowing to Mr. Paul, and pointing to the quarter of the vessel.

“And why in that direction, Sir?” observed Paul. “I am going on board of the frigate.”

“I know it, Sir; it was considerate on my part: I was allowing for the angle of obliquity

in your vision. You would have exactly fetched the boat."

The indignation of Mr. Paul was now at its height; and Pearce, the master, who was much annoyed at Jerry's excessive impertinence, which he knew Captain M—— would never have overlooked, detained the boat for a minute, while he wrote a few lines to Price, requesting him to send the bearer of it to the mast-head, upon delivery, for his impertinent conduct. "Mr. J——, take this on board, and deliver it from me to the commanding officer."

"Ay, ay, Sir," replied Jerry. "Shove off there, forward."

Mr. Peter looked Jerry earnestly in his face for some time, as they were pulling on board.

"Well now, d—n it, I like you, if it's only for your excessive impudence."

"A negative sort of commendation, but I believe it the only one that he has," replied the other, in a surly tone.

"Highly flattered, Sir," replied Jerry to Mr.

Peter, "that you should perceive any thing to induce you to like me: but I am sorry I cannot return the compliment, for I really cannot perceive any thing to like you for. As for your friend there, I can only say, that I detest all *crooked* ways.—In bow forward!—way enough. Now, gentlemen, with your permission, I'll show you the road," said the youngster, climbing up the side.

Jerry, who had some suspicion that the note was not in his favour, took the liberty, as it was neither sealed nor wafered, of reading it under the half-deck, while Price was shewing the two gentlemen into the cabin. Not to deliver a note on service was an offence for which Captain M—— would have dismissed him from the ship; but to be perched up, like a monkey, at the mast-head, in the afternoon, after having fought like a man in the morning, was very much against the grain. At any other time, he would have cared little about it. He went upon deck again, where he found Prose on the

gangway—"Well, Prose, my boy, how are you?"

"Why, upon my soul, Jerry, I am tired to death. Seven times have I been backward and forward to that abominable privateer, and now my tea is ready, and I am ordered to go again for these gentlemen's things."

"Well, that is hard. I will go for you, Prose, shall I? Where's the boat?"

"All ready, alongside. Well, now, it's very kind of you, Jerry, I do declare."

Jerry laid hold of the man-ropes, and began to descend the side—and then, as if recollecting himself of a sudden, said, "Oh, by the by, I had nearly forgot. Here's a note from the master to Mr. Price. Give it him, Prose."

"Yes, Jerry, I will," replied Prose, walking over to the side of the quarter-deck where Price was carrying on the duty, while Jerry made all the haste he could, and shoved off in the boat.

"A note, Sir, from Mr. Pearce, the master."

“ Hum,” said Price, running it over. “ Mr. Prose, go up to the mast-head, and stay there till I call you down.”

“ Sir !” replied Prose, aghast.

“ No reply, Sir—up immediately.”

“ Why, Sir, it was ——”

“ Another word, Sir, and I’ll keep you there all night,” cried Price, walking forward, in furtherance of the duty he was carrying on.

“ Well, now, I do declare ! What have I done ?” said Prose, with a whimpering voice, as he reluctantly ascended the main-rigging, not unperceived by Jerry, who was watching the result as he pulled on board of the privateer.

“ Come on board for these gentlemen’s clothes, Sir,” said Jerry, reporting himself to Mr. Pearce, who, not a little surprised to see him, inquired—

“ Did Mr. Price receive my note ?”

“ Yes, Sir, he did.”

“ Why, I requested him to mast-head you !”

“Many thanks, Sir, for your kindness,” replied the youngster, touching his hat.

Pearce, who was annoyed that his request should not have been complied with, stated his feelings on the subject to Price, when he returned to the ship in the evening.

Price declared that he had sent Prose to the mast-head, and had not called him down until eight o'clock. The affair was thus explained, and Jerry was pardoned for the ingenuity of his *ruse de guerre*, while all the comfort that was received by the unfortunate Prose was being informed, on the ensuing morning, that it was all a mistake.

The prize being now ready, Captain M—— desired Courtenay to take charge of it, and select two of the midshipmen to accompany him. His choice fell upon Seymour and Jerry: the latter being selected rather for his own amusement, than for his qualities as an officer. The distance to Jamaica, to which island he was directed to proceed, and from thence with his

crew to obtain a passage to Barbadoes, was not great, and Captain M—— did not like to have the frigate short-manned ; he was therefore not allowed to take more than ten seamen with him, five prisoners being sent on board, to assist in navigating the vessel.

Mr. Capon and Mr. Contract, at their own request, went as passengers.

In the afternoon, as soon as the provisions were on board, Courtenay received his written orders, and in a few hours the frigate was out of sight. They had barely time to stow away everything in its place, and make the necessary arrangements, when a heavy N. E. swell, and lowering horizon, predicted a continuance of the fair wind, and plenty of it. So it proved ; the wind increased rapidly, and the men found it difficult to reduce the canvas in sufficient time. Before dark, the wind blew with considerable force, not steadily, but in fitful gusts : and the sun, as he descended in the wave, warned them, by his red and fiery aspect, to prepare for an increase of

the gale. The schooner flew before it, under her diminished sail, rolling gunnel-to in the deep trough, or lurching heavily as her weather quarter was born up aloft by the culminating swell. All was secured for the night ; the watch was set, and Seymour walked the deck, while Courtenay and the rest went below, and at an early hour retired to their beds.

Among other reasons for selecting our hero as one of his assistants, Courtenay was influenced by his perfect knowledge of the French language, which might prove useful in communicating with the French prisoners, who were sent on board to assist in working the vessel. Jerry had also boasted of his talent in that way, as he wished to go in the prize ; and although the reader, from the specimen which he has had, may not exactly give credit to his assertions ; yet Courtenay, who had never heard him, believed that he was pretty well acquainted with the language.

But, soon after they had parted with the

frigate, when Courtenay desired the French prisoners to lay hold of the ropes and assist in shortening sail, they all refused. Seymour was not on deck at the time; he had been desired to superintend the arrangements below: and although he had been informed of their conduct, he had not yet spoken to the prisoners. Two of them were sitting aft under the lee of the weather-bulwark, as Seymour was walking the deck to and fro. They were in earnest conversation, when Seymour stopped near to them, carelessly leaning over the weather-quarter, watching the long following seas, when he overheard one say to the other—" *Taisez, peut-être qu'il nous entend.*" " *Nous verrons,*" replied the other—who immediately rose, and addressed Seymour in French, relative to the weather. What he had previously heard induced our hero to shake his head, and continue to look over the weather-quarter, and as Seymour only answered in the English negative to a further interrogation, the prisoners did not

think it worth while to remove out of his hearing, but, satisfied with his not being able to comprehend them, sat down again, and resumed their conversation. The lurching of the vessel was a sufficient reason for not walking the deck ; but Seymour, to remove all suspicion, took another turn or two, and then again held on by the ropes close by the Frenchmen. The wind blew too fresh to permit him to catch more than an occasional sentence or two of their conversation : but what he heard made him more anxious to collect more.

“ *Ils ne sont que seize, avec ce petit misère,*” observed one, “ *et nous sommes—*” Here the rest of the sentence was lost. Seymour reckoned up the English on board, and found that, with Billy Pitts, whom Macallan had allowed Courtenay to take with him as his steward, they exactly amounted to that number. The latter epithet he considered, justly enough, to be bestowed upon his friend Jerry. A few minutes afterwards, he intercepted—“ They’ll throw us

overboard, if we do not succeed—we'll throw them overboard, if we do." "*Courage, mon ami, il n'y aura pas de difficulté ; nous sommes trop forts,*" replied the other, as, terminating their conversation, they rose and walked forward.

It was evident to our hero that something was in agitation ; but at the same time it appeared perfectly incomprehensible, that six prisoners should have even formed the idea of attempting the recapture of a vessel manned with sixteen Englishmen, and that they should consider themselves *so strong* as to ensure success. Determined to report what he had heard to Courtenay, Seymour walked the remainder of his watch, was relieved, and went below to his hammock.

The wind had increased during the night ; but as it was fair, and the sky clear, and the sun shone bright, the breeze was rather a matter of congratulation when they met at breakfast in the morning, although Peter and Paul com-

plained of the violent motion of the vessel having taken away their appetite. Seymour reported to Courtenay the fragments of the conversation which he had overheard; and, insane as appeared to be the idea of recapture, the latter agreed with him that it demanded caution on their parts: but as it would appear very opposite to the English character to take open measures against six prisoners, when they were so numerous, he contented himself with desiring all the arms and ammunition to be stowed in the cabin, and gave orders that the prisoners, as they refused to work, should not be allowed to come on deck after dusk,—and then gave the affair no further thought. Seymour was aware that, although it was his duty to report the circumstance, he had no right to press the matter upon Courtenay, who was to be supposed the best judge; still he was not satisfied. He had an unaccountable foreboding that all was not right. He turned the subject

in his mind until dinner was announced by Billy Pitts, which put an end to his reverie.

The violent jerking motion of the vessel made it no easy task to retain a position at the table, which was securely lashed. As for placing on it the whole of the dinner at once, decanters, &c., that would have been certain destruction; a plate and spoon for their soup was all which Billy Pitts, who was major domo, would trust them with. Paul, who was not the best sailor in the world, had secured to himself the seat to windward, and it consequently fell to his lot to help the pea-soup, which was placed at the weather-side of the table. To save time and breakage,—two important things in a sea-mess,—they all held their own plates, which they thrust in towards the tureen from the different quarters of the table to receive their supply. Paul having helped those nearest to him, rose from his chair that he might see to fill the plates on the other side of the tureen. He was leaning over, his centre of

gravity being considerably beyond the perpendicular, when a heavy sea struck the vessel, and threw her nearly on her-beam ends, pitching Paul right over the table to leeward. With the tureen, which he did not forget to take with him, he flew into Jerry's arms, and they rolled together on the floor. The contents of the tureen were rapidly deposited in the open bosom of Jerry, who disengaged himself from the embraces of his enemy as fast as he could amidst the laughter of his companions.

"Well, you asked for soup," observed Courtenay.

"Yes, and my friend has helped me very liberally," replied Jerry, who was not at all out of humour, except when he was foiled with his own weapons. In the meantime, Paul, who was a little stunned with the blow he had received on his head, had continued on the floor rolling in the pea-soup, and was just attempting to get on his legs.

"You've got it all to yourself there, Mr.

Paul. As you seem to like it, perhaps you would prefer a spoon," said Jerry, offering him one at the same time.

"I say, Paul, what a capital Harlequin you would make," observed Peter.

Paul, who had recovered his legs, and now clung on by the table, looked an answer horribly asquint, as if he did not admire the joke; but he resumed his seat at the table.

The remainder of the dinner was brought down without further accident occurring; and by the time it was over, as the bottle had to be passed round, and every body was obliged to drink off immediately, and put his wine glass inside his waistcoat to save it from perdition, they all were very merry and happy before the repast had been concluded. "There," said Jerry, stroking himself down when he had finished his cheese, as if he were a Falstaff, "a kitten might play with me now."

"More than one dare do with me," rejoined

Peter, "for I'm cursedly inclined to *shoot the cat.*"

But as the second evening closed in, the sky was loaded with heavy clouds,—the scud flew wildly past them,—the sea increased to mountains high,—and the gale roared through the rigging of the schooner, which was now impelled before it under bare poles. They were really in danger. The hatches were battened down fore and aft—the ports were knocked out to allow for the escape of the water, which poured over in such volumes as would otherwise have swamped the vessel—and Courtenay and his crew remained on deck until dawn of day, when the violence of the gale seemed to have abated.

Courtenay desired Seymour and Jerry to turn in, and relieve him at eight o'clock. Our hero and Jerry went down into the cabin, where they found the two passengers, who, although they had not come on deck during the night, had not retired to bed. Peter was sitting up to windward on the locker, looking very pale

and very sea-sick. Paul was on the cabin floor, with one hand holding on by the leg of the table, and a bottle of brandy in the other. His prayer-book he had abandoned during a fright, and it was washing about in the lee-scuppers. Jerry was delighted, but put on a rueful face.

"Well," observed Paul, who was nearly frightened out of his wits, "how is it now?"

"Worse and worse," replied Jerry; "there's nine inches water in the well."

"Oh, my God!" cried Paul, who was not very *au fait* at nautical technicalities,—raising one eye up to heaven, while the other appeared to rest upon the bottle of brandy.

"But why don't you turn in?" said Jerry; "we can go to the bottom just as comfortably in bed as anywhere else."

"I agree with you," replied Peter, who had often been at sea, and knew very well that all was right, by the two midshipmen coming off deck. "My mother prophesied that I never

should die in my bed ; but I'm determined that I will."

"You had better turn in, Mr. Paul," said Seymour, kindly ; "I'll ring for the steward."

Billy Pitts made his appearance. "By gad, gentlemen, the d—d schooner under water."

"Under water !" cried Paul, with dismay. The bottle was applied to his mouth, as if he was determined to leave as little room as possible for the element which he expected instantaneously to be struggling in.

With the assistance of Billy, Paul was placed in one of the standing bed places at the side of the cabin. Jerry put his brandy bottle at the side of his pillow,—kindly informing him that he would have an opportunity of taking a few more swigs before he went down, for the water was only up to her *bends* at present. Peter was already in the cot next to him, and Seymour and Jerry turned in, without taking off their clothes, in Courtenay's bed, on the other side of the cabin. Before they had fallen

asleep, they heard Paul cry out, "Peter ! Peter !"

"Well, what do you want?"

"Do you think there are any hopes?"

Peter, who wished to frighten his companion, replied, gravely—"I am afraid not;—but, Paul, I've just been reflecting upon the subject. Here we are, two men considerably on the wrong side of forty. We have enjoyed our youth, which is the happiest period of our life. We are now fast descending the hill, to old age, decrepitude, and disease—what avails a few more years, allowing that we are spared this time ! Don't you perceive the *comfort* of my observations?"

Paul groaned, and made no answer ; but even the creaking of the timbers could not disguise the repeated creak-creak-creak, as the brandy from the bottle gurgled down his throat.

CHAPTER XIII.

Two striplings, lads more like to run
Than to commit such slaughter.

Cymbeline.

THE gales of wind in the tropical climates are violent while they last, but are seldom of long duration. Such was the case in the present instance: for it subsided in a few hours after day-light; and the schooner, that had been propelled before it, was now sheltered under the lee of the Island of St. Domingo, and, with all her canvas spread, was gliding through a

tranquil sea. Again they were collected round the dinner-table, to a more quiet repast than they had hitherto enjoyed since they had come on board. Paul had not quite recovered his spirits, although, when he went on deck, just before the dinner was announced, he was delighted at the sudden change which had taken place; but the mirth of his companions at his expense was not received in very good part.

After dinner, finding himself in a better humour, he turned to Peter, and addressed him. "I say, Peter, I made no answer to your remarks, last night, when we expected to go down, but I have since had time deliberately to weigh your arguments, and I should like you to explain to me where the *comfort* was that you so strenuously pointed out, for hang me if I can discover it."

Seymour again had charge of the first watch; and, notwithstanding that the orders for the prisoners to remain below after dark had been communicated to them, he observed that, on one

pretence or other, they occasionally came on deck, and repeatedly put their heads above the hatchway. This conduct reminded him of the conversation which he had overheard, and again it was the subject of his thoughts. Captain M—— had one day observed to him, that if there was no duty going on, he could not employ himself in a more useful manner, when he was walking the deck, than by placing himself, or the ship, in difficult situations, and reflecting upon the most eligible means of relief. “Depend upon it,” observed Captain M——, “the time will come, when you will find it of use to you; and it will create for you a presence of mind, in a sudden dilemma, which may be the salvation of yourself and the ship you are in.”

Seymour, remembering this injunction, reflected upon what would be the most advisable steps to take, in case of the French prisoners attempting a re-capture during his watch on

deck. That there were but six, it was very true; but, at the same time, during the night-watches there were but five English seamen, and the officer of the watch, on deck. Should the Frenchmen have the boldness to attempt to regain possession of the vessel, there was no doubt that, if the watch could be surprised, the hatches would be secured over those below. What should be the steps, in such a case, that he ought to take?

Such were the cogitations of Seymour, when midnight was reported, and Jerry was summoned to relieve the deck—which he did not do, relying upon our hero's good-nature, until past one bell. Up he came, with his ready apology—"I really beg your pardon, my dear fellow, but I had not a wink of sleep last night."

"Never mind, Jerry, I am not at all sleepy. I had been thinking about these French prisoners—I cannot get their conversation out of my head."

“Why, I did not like it myself, when I heard of it,” replied Jerry. “I hope they won’t attempt it in my watch; it would not give them much trouble to launch me over the quarter—I should skim away, ‘flying light,’ like a lady’s bonnet.”

“What would you do, Jerry, if you perceived them rushing aft to retake the vessel?” inquired Seymour, who was aware of his ready invention.

“Skim up the rigging like a lamp-lighter, to be sure. Not that it would be of much use, if they gained the day—except to say a few prayers before I went astern.”

“Well, that was my idea; but I thought that if one had a musquet and ammunition up there, a diversion might be created in favour of those below—for the prisoners have no fire-arms.”

“Very true,” replied Jerry; “we might puzzle them not a little.”

“Now, Jerry, suppose we were to take that

precaution, for I do not like their manœuvres during my watch. It will do no harm, if it does no good. Suppose you fetch two musquets and cartouch-boxes from the cabin—I'll take one, and secure it in the fore-cross-trees, and you do the same at the main: for Courtenay is too proud to keep an armed watch."

Jerry agreed to the proposal, and brought up the musquets and ammunition. Seymour gave him a stout *fox* to lash the musquet; and taking another himself, they both ascended the rigging at the same time, and were busy securing the musquets up and down at the head of the lower masts, when they heard a sudden rush upon deck, beneath them.

It was dark, though not so dark but they could distinguish what was going on, and they perceived that their thoughts had but anticipated the reality. "The French are up!" roared the man at the wheel, to rouse those below, as well as the watch who were lying about the decks; but, to the astonishment of the youngsters aloft,

as well as of the men on deck, not six, but about twenty Frenchmen, armed with cutlasses, made their appearance. The hatches were over and secured in a minute; and the unarmed English on deck were then attacked by the superior force. It was with agonized feelings that Seymour and Jerry heard the scuffle which took place: it was short; and plunge after plunge into the water, alongside, announced the death of each separate victim. The man at the wheel struggled long—he was of an athletic frame—but, overpowered by numbers, he was launched over the taffrail.

The French, supposing that the remainder of the crew were below, placed sentries over the hatches, that they might not be forced, and then collected together abaft, altering the course of the vessel for St. Domingo.

It will be necessary to explain the sudden appearance of so many Frenchmen. When the captain of the privateer was occupied, during the night previous to the attack, with his several

plans of defence, he also arranged one for the recapture of the vessel, in case of their being overpowered. With this in view, he had constructed a platform in the hold, on which a tier of casks was stowed, and under which there was sufficient space for fifteen or twenty men to lie concealed. When the privateer's men had been driven below, and the hatches secured over them, fifteen, armed with cutlasses, concealed themselves in this place, with the hopes of recapturing the vessel from the prize-master, after she should have parted company with the frigate. The prisoners, who had been sent on board to assist in navigating the schooner to Jamaica, had communicated with them, unperceived, after dark. As all the English were fatigued, from having been on deck during the previous night, the middle watch was proposed for the attempt, which had thus far been attended with success.

Seymour and Jerry remained quiet at the mast-heads; for although they did not attempt

to communicate with each other, for fear of discovery, they both rightly judged that it would be best to remain till day-light ; by which time, some plans would have been formed by the party below, which their situation would enable them materially to assist. Nearly four hours elapsed previous to the dawning of the day, during which interval Jerry had ample time to say some of those prayers which he spoke of, and which it was to be supposed that they both did not fail to offer up in their perilous situation.

As soon as the day began to break, Jerry, who had not yet loaded his musquet, lest he might be heard, thought it time to prepare for action. He primed, and put in his cartridge, in the ramming down of which a slight ringing of the ramrod against the muzzle attracted the notice of one of the Frenchmen, who, looking up, after a short time, exclaimed :—

“ *Diable ! c'est Monsieur Misère qui es là.* ”

Jerry levelled with a steady aim, and the

bullet passed through the broad chest of the Frenchman, who rolled upon the deck.

“ Now, they may chaunt your *miserere*,” cried the youngster.

A second shot from the fore-cross-trees laid another Frenchman alongside of his companion.

“ *Comment ! diable ! nous serons abimés par ces enfans-là ; il faut monter.*”

The musquets were again loaded, and again each boy brought down his bird, before the Frenchmen could decide upon their operations. It was a case of necessity that the youngsters should be attacked ; but it was a service of no little danger, and of certain destruction to one, who must fall a sacrifice, that the other might be able to secure the youngster before he had time to reload his musquet. Two of the most daring flew to the main-rigging, one ascending to windward, and the other to leeward. Seymour, who perceived their intentions, reserved his fire until he saw the one in the weather rigging fall by Jerry's musquet ; he then levelled at the one

to leeward, who dropped into the lee-chains, and from thence into the sea. Thus had six Frenchmen already fallen by the coolness and determination of two boys, one but fourteen, and the other not sixteen years old.

A short consultation ended in the Frenchmen resorting to the only measures likely to be attended with success. Leaving three to guard the hatchways, the remaining twelve, divided into four parties, began to mount both fore and main-rigging, to windward and to leeward, at the same time. The fate of Jerry and Seymour now appeared to be decided. They might each kill one man more, and then would have been hurled into the sea. But during the consultation, Seymour, who anticipated this movement, and had a knife in his pocket, divided the lanyards of the lee top-mast rigging, and, running up the weather side with his musquet and ammunition, as soon as he had gained the top-mast cross-trees, hauled up the lee rigging after him; thus gaining a position that would

admit but one person mounting up to him at a time. He called to Jerry, pointing out what he had done, that he might do the same; but unfortunately Jerry had not a knife, and could not. He contented himself with climbing up to the top-mast cross-trees, to which he was followed by two of the Frenchmen. Jerry levelled his musquet, and passed his bullet through the skull of one of his pursuers, whose heavy fall on deck shook the schooner fore and aft: and then, aware that nothing more could be done, pitched his musquet overboard, that they might not gain possession of it, and climbing, with a nimbleness suited to the occasion, up to the mast-head, descended by the top-gallant-stay, to the fore-top-mast cross-trees, and joined Seymour, in the presence of the exasperated Frenchmen, who now, unable to reach either of them, were at a non-plus. "I say, Monsieur, no catchee, no habbee," cried Jerry, laughing, and putting his hand to his side from loss of breath.

But we must now acquaint the reader with what

is going on below. The surprise of Courtenay when he found the hatches down, and the deck in possession of the French, was removed, when the men who had been secured with him stated that, as they lay in their hammocks, they had been awakened by a large body of men running up the hatchway. He now perceived that there must have been men concealed in the hold of the vessel. The struggle on deck, the splashing in the water, all had been plainly heard below ; they were aware of the fate of their shipmates, and did not expect to see daylight again, until they were handed up as prisoners in a French port.

The feelings of Courtenay were not enviable. He upbraided himself for having, by his want of prudence, lost the vessel, and sacrificed the lives of the two midshipmen and five seamen who had the watch on deck. The party below consisted of Courtenay, Peter and Paul, Billy Pitts, and five seamen ; and a consultation was held as

to their proceedings. To regain the vessel and avenge the death of their shipmates, or to perish in the attempt, was the determination of the lieutenant.

He was aware that the French had no fire-arms; and, amply supplied as they were, he would have cared little for their numbers if once on deck; but how to get on deck was the problem. To set fire to the vessel, and rush up in the flames,—to scuttle her,—or to blow her up, and all go down together, were each proposed and agitated.

Peter's plan was considered as the most feasible. He suggested, that one half of the cabin table, which was divided in two, should be placed upon the other, so as to raise it up to the combings of the skylight-hatch; on the upper table, to place a pound or two of powder, which, from the ascending principle of explosion, would blow off the skylight and grating, without injuring the vessel below. Then, with

their musquets loaded and bayonets fixed, to jump on the table, and from thence, if possible, gain the deck.

This was agreed to, and the preparations were well forward, when the report of Jerry's musquet was heard—another succeeded, and they were perplexed. Had the Frenchmen fire-arms?—and if so, what could they be firing at? The falling of the bodies on deck, and the indistinct curses of the Frenchmen, puzzled them even more. “What can it be?” observed Courtenay.

“I recollect now,” said Paul, “as I lay awake, I saw young *devil-skin* pass my bed with a musquet—I wondered what it was for.”

“Then, probably, he has gained the rigging with it, and is safe,” cried Courtenay, intuitively. “Be quick! Where's the powder? Take that candle further off.”

The train was laid as the musquets continued to be discharged; they removed from the cabin;—it was fired, and the skylight was blown up,

killing the Frenchman who guarded the hatch-way, at the very moment that the Frenchmen were in the rigging, puzzled with the manœuvres of Seymour and the escape of Jerry.

Courtenay and his party rushed into the cabin, mounted the table, and were on deck before the smoke had cleared away; and the Frenchmen, who had not had time to descend the rigging, were at their mercy.

Mercy they were not entitled to. They had shewn none to the unarmed English, whom they had wantonly thrown into the sea when they had overpowered them, and were now thirsting for the blood of the two boys. No mercy was shewn to them. As they dropped one by one from the rigging, wounded or dead, they were tossed into the wave, as an expiatory sacrifice to the manes of the murdered Englishmen. In a few minutes the carnage was over. Seymour and Jerry descended from their little *fortalice* aloft, and were warmly greeted by their friends as they reached the deck.

"Really, Mr. Paul," said Jerry, shaking his proffered hand, "this is quite an unexpected pleasure."

"Well, I never thought that I could possibly like you," answered the other.

"Well," observed Jerry, "it has quite stopped my growth."

"But not your tongue, I hope," replied Peter; "that would be a pity. Now explain to us how it all happened."

Jerry entered into the detail with his accustomed humour, while Courtenay walked aft with Seymour, to have a more sober narrative of the transactions which we have described, and which afforded ample matter for conversation, until the prize was brought to an anchor in Port Royal harbour, where Courtenay and his crew were ordered a passage to Barbadoes, in a frigate that had orders to proceed there in a few days; and Mr. Peter Capon and Mr. Paul Contract went on shore, declaring, that until a

mail-coach ran between there and England, they would never leave the island, and again subject themselves to the charming vicissitudes of a sea-faring existence.

CHAPTER XIV.

For the exaction of all form, observance, ceremony, subordination, and the like, even though, while he compels obedience, he may get himself privately laughed at, commend me to our governor, Don Fabricio.

Humours of Madrid,

IN a few days, Courtenay, with the prize crew of the *Aspasia*, sailed for Barbadoes, in the frigate which had been ordered to receive them for a passage.

The frigate was commanded by one of the most singular characters in the service. He was a clever man, a thorough sailor, and well acquainted with the details and technicalities of

the profession—a spirited and enterprising officer, but of the most arbitrary disposition. So well was he acquainted with the regulations of the service, that he could hedge himself in so as to ensure a compliance with the most preposterous orders, or draw the officer who resisted into a premunire which would risk his commission.

In a profession where one man is embarked with many isolated from the power whence he derives his own—where his fiat must be received without a murmur by hundreds who can reason as well as himself, it is absolutely requisite that he should be invested with an authority amounting to despotism. True it is that he is held responsible to his superiors for any undue exercise of this authority; but amongst so many to whom it is confided, there must be some who, from disposition, or the bad example of those under whom they have served, will not adhere to the limits which have been prescribed. This, however, is no reason for reducing that authority, which, as you govern wholly by

opinion, is necessary for the discipline which upholds the service ; but it is a strong reason for not delegating it to those who are not fit to be entrusted.

Captain Bradshaw had many redeeming qualities. Oppressive as he was, he admired a spirit of resistance in an officer, when it was shewn in a just cause, and, upon reflection, was invariably his friend, for he felt that his own natural temperament was increased by abject obedience. Raynal, I think it is, has said that “ the pride of men in office arises as much from the servility of their inferiors or expectants, as from any other cause.” In our service, they are all inferiors, and all expectants. Can it then be surprising that a captain occasionally becomes tyrannical ? But Captain Bradshaw was not naturally tyrannical : he had become so, because, promoted at an early age, he had never been afterwards opposed ; no one contradicted him ; every one applauded his jokes, and magnified his mirth into wit. He would try by a

court-martial an officer who had committed a slight error, and on the same day would open his purse and extend his patronage to another whom he knew not, but had been informed that he was deserving, and had no friends. To his seamen he was as lavish with his money as he was with the cat. He would give a man a new jacket one day, and cut it to pieces on his back with a rope's end on the next. Yet it was not exactly inconsistency—it was an eccentricity of character—not natural, but created by the service. The graft was of a worse quality than the parent stock, and the fruit was a compound of the two. The sailors, who are of the most forgiving temper in the world, and will pardon a hundred faults for one redeeming quality, declared that “he warn't a bad captain after all.”

His violent and tyrannical disposition made him constantly at variance with his officers, and continual changes took place in his ship; but it was observed, that those who had left him

from a spirited resistance, were kindly received and benefited by his patronage, while those who submitted were neglected. Like a pretty but clever woman, who is aware that flattery is to be despised, and yet, from habit, cannot exist without it, so Captain Bradshaw exacted the servility which he had been accustomed to, yet rewarded not those by whom it was administered. All the midshipmen promoted on the station had to pass through the ordeal of sailing with Captain Bradshaw, who generally had a vacancy; and it certainly had a good effect upon those young men who were inclined to presume upon their newly acquired rank: for they were well schooled before they quitted his ship.

When Courtenay and his party went on board of the frigate, the first-lieutenant, master, and surgeon, indignant at language which had been used to them by the captain, refused to dine in the cabin, when they were invited by the steward, who reported to Captain Bradshaw that the officers would not accept his invitation.

“ Won't they, by G—d ! I'll see that. Send my clerk here.”

The clerk made his appearance, with an abject bow.

“ Mr. Powell, sit down, and write as I dictate,” said Captain Bradshaw, who, walking up and down the fore-cabin, composed a memorandum in which, after a long preamble, the first-lieutenant, master, and surgeon, were directed to dine with him every day, until further orders. Captain Bradshaw having signed it, sent for the first-lieutenant, and delivered it himself into his hands.

“ Ferguson !—Bradly !” cried the first-lieutenant, entering the gun-room, with the paper in his hand, “ here's something for all three of us,—a positive order to dine with the skipper every day, until—he gets tired of our company.”

“ I'll be hanged if I do,” replied the surgeon.

“ I'll put myself in the sick-list.”

“ And, if I am obliged to go, I'll not touch anything,” rejoined the master. “ There's an

old proverb, 'you may lead a horse to the pond, but you can't make him drink.'"

"Whatever we do," replied Roberts, the first-lieutenant, "we must act in concert; but I have been long enough in the service to know that we must obey first, and remonstrate afterwards. That this is an unusual order, I grant, nor do I know by what regulations of the service it can be enforced; but at the same time I consider that we run a great risk in refusing to obey it. Only observe, in the preamble, how artfully he inserts 'appearance of a conspiracy, tending to bring him into contempt;' and again, 'for the better discipline of his Majesty's service, which must invariably suffer when there is an appearance of want of cordiality between those to whom the men must look for an example.' Upon my soul he's devilish clever. I do believe he'd find out a reason for drawing out all our double teeth, if he was inclined, and prove it was all for the benefit of his Majesty's service. Well now, what's to be done?"

“ Why, what’s your opinion, Roberts ?”

“ Oh, mine is to go ; and if you will act with me, he won’t allow us to dine with him a second time.”

“ Well, then, I agree,” replied the surgeon.

“ And so must I, then, I presume ; but, by heavens, it’s downright tyranny and oppression.”

“ Never mind, listen to me. Let’s all go, and all behave as ill as we can—be as unmannerly as bears—abuse every thing—be as familiar as possible, and laugh in his face. He cannot touch us for it, if we do not go too far—and he’ll not trouble us to come a second time.”

Their plans were arranged ; and at three o’clock they were ushered into the cabin, with one of the midshipmen of the ship, and Jerry, who, as a stranger, had been honoured with an invitation.

Captain Bradshaw, whose property was equal to his liberality, piqued himself upon keeping a good table ; his cook was an *artiste*, and his wines

were of the very best quality. After all, there was no great hardship in dining with him—but, “upon compunction!”—No.

The officers bowed. The captain, satisfied with their obedience, intended, although he had brought them there by force, to do the honours of his table with the greatest urbanity.

“Roberts,” said he, “do me the favour to take the foot of the table.—Doctor, here’s a chair for you.—Mr. Bradly, come round on this side. Now, then, steward, off covers, and let us see what you have for us. Why, youngster, does your captain starve you?”

“No, Sir,” replied Jerry, who knew what was going on; “but he don’t give me a dinner every day.”

“Humph!” muttered the captain, who thought Mr. Jerry very free upon so short an acquaintance.

The soup was handed round; the first spoonful that Roberts took in his mouth, he threw

out on the snow white deck, crying out, as soon as his mouth was empty, "O Lord!"

"Why, what's the matter?" inquired the captain.

"So cursed hot, I've burnt my tongue."

"Oh, that's all! Steward, wipe up that mess," said the captain, who was rather nice in his eating.

"Do you know Jemmy Cavan, Sir, at Barbadoes?" inquired the doctor.

"No, Sir, I know no Jemmies," replied Captain Bradshaw, surprised at his familiar address.

"He's a devilish good fellow, Sir, I can tell you. When he gets you on shore, he'll make you dine with him every day, whether or not. He'll take no denial."

"Now that's what I call a d—d good fellow: you don't often meet a chap like him," observed the master.

Captain Bradshaw felt that he was indirectly called a *chap*, which did not please him.

“ Mr. Bradly, will you take some mutton?”

“ If you please,” said the master.

“ Roberts, I’ll trouble you to carve the saddle of mutton.”

The first-lieutenant cut out a slice, and taking it on the fork, looked at it suspiciously, and then held his nose over it.

“ Why, what’s the matter?”

“ Rather high, Sir, I’m afraid.”

“ Oh, I smell it here,” said Jerry, who entered into the joke.

“ Indeed! Steward, remove that dish; fortunately it is not all our dinner. What will you take, Mr. Bradly?”

“ Why, really, I seldom touch anything but the joint. I hate your kickshaws, there’s so much pawing about them. I’ll wait, if you please; in the meantime, I’ll drink a glass of wine with you, Captain Bradshaw.”

“ The devil you will!” was nearly out of the captain’s mouth, at this reversal of the order of

things ; but he swallowed it down, and answered, in a surly tone, " With great pleasure, Sir."

" Come, doctor, let you and I hob and nob," said the first-lieutenant. They did so, and clicked their glasses together with such force as to break them both, and spill the wine upon the fine damask table-cloth. Jerry could contain himself no longer, but burst out into a roar of laughter, to the astonishment of Captain Bradshaw, who never had seen a midshipman thus conduct himself at his table before ; but Jerry could not restrain his inclination for joining with the party, although he had no excuse for *his* behaviour.

" Bring some wine-glasses, steward ; and you'll excuse me, gentlemen, but I will thank you not to try the strength of them again," said Captain Bradshaw, with a very majestic air.

" Now, Mr. Ferguson, I shall be happy to take a glass of wine with you. What will you have ? There's Sherry and Moselle."

" I prefer Champagne, if you please," an-

swered the surgeon, who knew that Captain Bradshaw did not produce it, except when strangers were at the table.

Captain Bradshaw restrained his indignation, and ordered Champagne to be brought.

"I'll join you," cried the first-lieutenant, shoving in his glass.

"Come, younker, let you and I have a glass cosey together," said Jerry to the midshipman, who, frightened at what was going on, moved his chair a little further from Jerry, and then looked first at him and then at the captain.

"Oh, pray take a glass with the young gentleman," said Captain Bradshaw, with mock politeness.

"Come, steward, none of your half allowance, if you please," continued the impertinent Jerry. "Now, then, my cock, here's *towards* you, and 'better luck still.'"

Captain Bradshaw was astonished. "I say, youngster, did Captain M—— ever flog you?"

"No, Sir," replied Jerry, demurely, perceiv-

ing that he had gone too far ; " he always treats his officers like gentlemen."

"Then, I presume, Sir, when they are on board of his ship, that they conduct themselves as gentlemen."

This hint made Jerry dumb for some time ; the officers, however, continued as before. The surgeon dropped his plate, full of damascene tart, on the deck. The first-lieutenant spilt his snuff on the table-cloth, and laid his snuff-box on the table, which he knew to be the captain's aversion ; and the master requested a glass of grog, as the rotgut French wines had given him a pain in the bowels. Captain Bradshaw could hardly retain his seat upon the chair, upon which he fidgetted right and left. He perceived that his officers were behaving in a very unusual manner, and that it was with a view to his annoyance : yet it was impossible for him to take notice of breaking glasses, and finding fault with the cookery, which they took care to do, sending their plates away before they had

eaten a mouthful, with apparent disgust ; neither could he demand a court-martial for awkwardness or want of good manners at his own table. He began to think that he had better have left out the "*every day until further orders*," in the memorandum, as rescinding it immediately would have been an acknowledgment of their having gained the victory ; and as to their going on in this way, to put up with it was impossible.

The dinner was over, and the dessert placed on the table. Captain Bradshaw passed the bottles round, helping himself to Madeira. Roberts took claret, and as soon as he had tasted it, "I beg your pardon, Captain Bradshaw," said he, "but this wine is corked."

"Indeed !—take it away, steward, and bring another bottle."

Another was put on the table.

"I hope you'll find that better, Mr. Roberts," said the captain, who really thought that what he stated had been the case.

"Yes," replied the first-lieutenant; "for the description of wine, it's well enough."

"What do you mean, Sir? Why, it's Chateau Margot, of the first growth."

"Excuse me, Sir," replied the officer, with an incredulous smile; "they must have imposed upon you."

Captain Bradshaw, who was an excellent judge of wine, called for a glass, and pouring out the claret, tasted it. "I must differ from you, Sir; and, moreover, I have no better."

"Then I'll trouble you to pass the Port, doctor, for I really cannot drink that stuff."

"Do you drink Port, Mr. Bradley?" said the captain, with a countenance as black as a thunder-cloud.

"No, not to-day; I'm not well in my inside: but I'll punish the Port to-morrow."

"So will I," said the surgeon.

"And as I am not among the *privileged*," added Jerry, who had already forgotten the hint, "I'll take my whack to-day."

"Perhaps you may," observed the captain, drily.

The officers now began to be very noisy, arguing among themselves upon points of service, and taking no notice whatever of the captain. The master, in explanation, drew a chart, with wine, upon the polished table, while the first-lieutenant defended his opinion with pieces of biscuit, laid at different positions—during which two more glasses were demolished.

The captain rang, and ordered coffee in an angry tone. When the officers had taken it, he bowed stiffly, and wished them good evening.

There was one dish which was an object of abhorrence to Captain Bradshaw. The first-lieutenant, aware of it, as they rose to depart, said, "Captain Bradshaw, if it's not too great a liberty, we should like to have some *tripe* to-morrow. We are all three very partial to it."

"So am I," rejoined Jerry.

Captain Bradshaw could hold out no longer. "Leave the cabin immediately, gentlemen. By

Heavens, you shall never put your legs under my table again."

"Are we not to dine here to-morrow, Sir?" replied the first-lieutenant, with affected surprise; "the order says, 'every day.'"

"Till further orders," roared the captain; "and now you have them, for I'll be d——d if ever you dine with me again."

The officers took their departure, restraining their mirth until they gained the gun-room; and Jerry was about to follow, when Captain Bradshaw caught him by the arm.

"Stop, my young gentleman, you've not had your 'whack' yet."

"I've had quite sufficient, Sir, I thank you," replied Jerry; "an excellent dinner—many thanks to your hospitality."

"Yes, but I must now give you your dessert."

"I have had my dessert and coffee too, Sir," said Jerry, trying to escape.

"But you have not had your *chasse café*, and I cannot permit you to leave the cabin

without it. Steward, desire a boatswain's mate to bring his cat, and a quarter-master to come here with seizings."

Jerry was now in a stew—the inflexible countenance of Captain Bradshaw shewed that he was in earnest. However, he held his tongue until the operators appeared, hoping that the captain would think better of it.

"Seize this young gentleman up to the breech of the gun, quarter-master!"

"Will you oblige me, Sir, by letting me know my offence?"

"No, Sir."

"I do not belong to your ship," continued Jerry. "If I have done wrong, Captain M—— is well known to be a strict officer, and will pay every attention to your complaint."

"I will save him the trouble, Sir."

Jerry was now seized up, and every arrangement made preparatory to punishment. "Well, Sir," resumed Jerry, "it must be as you please; but I know what Captain M—— will say."

“ What, Sir ?”

“ That you were angry with your officers, whom you could not punish, and revenged yourself upon a poor boy.”

“ Would he ?—Boatswain’s mate, where’s your cat ?”

“ Here, Sir ;—how many tails am I to use ?”

“ Oh, give him the whole nine.”

“ Why, your honour,” replied the man, in a compassionate tone, “ there’s hardly room for them, there.”

Jerry, who, when his indignation was roused, cared little what he said, and defied consequences, now addressed the captain.

“ Captain Bradshaw, before you commence, will you allow me to tell you what I will call you after the first lash ?”

“ What, Sir ?”

“ What !” cried Jerry, with scorn,—“ why, if you cut me to pieces, and turn me out of the service afterwards, I will call you a paltry

coward, and your own conscience, when you are able to reflect, will tell you the same."

Captain Bradshaw started back with astonishment at such unheard of language from a midshipman; but he was pleased with the undaunted spirit of the boy—perhaps he felt the truth of the observation. At all events, it saved Jerry. After a short pause, the captain said—

"Cast him loose; but observe, Sir, never let me see your face again while you are in the ship!"

"No, nor any other part of me, if I can help it," replied Jerry, buttoning up his clothes, and making a precipitate escape by the cabin-door.

CHAPTER XV.

The air no more was vital now,
But did a mortal poison grow.
The lungs, which used to fan the heart,
Served only now to fire each part ;
What should refresh, increased the smart. }

And now their very breath,
The chiefest sign of life, became the cause of death !

SPRAT, *Bishop of Rochester.*

THE *Aspasia* did not drop her anchor in Carlisle Bay until three weeks after the arrival of the frigate which brought up Courtenay and the prize crew ; but she had not been idle, having three valuable prizes, which she had captured in company. Courtenay immediately repaired on board of his ship, to report to Captain M—— the circumstances which had occurred connected with the loss of his five men.

He was too honourable to attempt to disguise or palliate the facts; on the contrary, he laid all the blame upon himself, and enhanced the merits of the two midshipmen. Captain M——, who admired his ingenuous confession, contented himself with observing, that he trusted it would be a caution to him during his future career in the service. To Seymour and Jerry he said nothing, as he was afraid that the latter would presume upon commendation; but he treasured up their conduct in his memory, and determined to lose no opportunity that might offer to reward them.

Courtenay descended to the gun-room, where he was warmly greeted by his messmates, who crowded round him to listen to his detail of the attempt to re-capture.

“Well,” observed Price, “it appears we have had a narrow chance of losing a messmate.”

“Narrow chance lose two, Sar,” replied Billy Pitts; “you forgit, Sar, I on board schooner!”

"Oh, Billy, are you there? How does the dictionary come on?"

"Come on well, Sar; I make a *corundum* on Massa Doctor, when on board schooner."

"Made a what?—a corundum! What can that be?"

"It ought to be something devilish hard," observed Courtenay.

"Yes, Sar, debblish hard find out. Now, Sar,—Why Massa Macallan like a general?"

"I'm sure I can't tell. We give it up, Billy."

"Then, Sar, I tell you. Because he *feel-ossifer*."

"Bravo, Billy!—Why you'll write a book soon. By the by, Macallan, I must not forget to thank you for the loan of that gentleman: he has made himself very useful, and behaved very well."

"Really, Massa Courtenay, I tought I not give you satisfaction."

"Why so, Billy?"

"Because, Sar, you nebber give me present—not one dollor."

"He has you there," said Price; "you must fork out."

"Not a rap—the nigger had perquisites. I saw the English merchants give him a handful of dollars, before they left the vessel."

"Ah! they real gentlemen, Massa Capon and massa,—— dam'um name—I forgot."

"And what am I, then, you black thief?"

"Oh! you, Sar, you very fine officer," replied Billy, quitting the gun-room.

Courtenay did not exactly like the answer—but there was nothing to lay hold of. As usual, when displeased, he referred to his snuff-box, muttering something in which the word "annoying" could only be distinguished.

The breeze from the windsail blew some of the snuff out of the box into the eyes of Macallan.

"I wish to heaven you would be more care-

ful, Courtenay," cried the surgeon, in an angry tone, and stamping with the pain.

"I really beg your pardon," replied Courtenay, "snuffing's a vile habit,—I wish I could leave it off."

"So do your messmates," replied the surgeon; "I cannot imagine what pleasure there can be in a practice in itself so nasty, independent of the destruction of the olfactory powers."

"It's exactly for that reason that I take snuff; I am convinced that I am a gainer by the loss of the power of smell."

"I consider it ungrateful, if not wicked, to say so," replied the surgeon, gravely. "The senses were given to us as a source of enjoyment."

"True, doctor," answered Courtenay, mimicking the language of Macallan; "and if I were a savage in the woods, there could not be a sense more valuable, or affording so much gratification, as the one in question."

I should rise with the sun, and inhale the fragrance of the shrubs and flowers, offered up in grateful incense to their Creator, and I should stretch myself under the branches of the forest tree, as evening closed, and enjoy the faint perfume with which they wooed the descending moisture after exhaustion from the solar heat. But in civilized society, where men and things are packed too closely together, the case is widely different: for one pleasant, you encounter twenty offensive smells; and of all the localities for villainous compounds, a ship is indubitably the worst; I therefore patronize ‘baccy,’ which, I presume, was intended for our use, or it would not have been created.”

“But not for our abuse.”

“Ah! there’s the rock that we all split upon—and I, with others, must plead guilty. The greatest difficulty in this world is, to know when and where to stop. Even a philosopher like yourself cannot do it. You allow your hypothesis to whirl in your brain, until it forms a vortex

which swallows up every thing that comes within its influence. A modern philosopher, with his hypothesis, is like the man possessed with a devil in times of yore ; and it is not to be cast out by any human means, that I know of."

"As you please," replied Macallan, laughing ; "I only deprecated a bad habit."

"An hypothesis is only a habit,—a habit of looking through a glass of one peculiar colour, which imparts its hue to all around it. We are but creatures of habit. Luxury is nothing more than contracting fresh habits, and having the means of administering to them—*ergo*, doctor, the more habits you have to gratify, the more luxuries you possess. You luxuriate in the contemplation of nature—Price in quoting, or trying to quote, Shakspeare—Billy Pitts in his dictionary—I in my snuff-box ; and surely we may all continue to enjoy our harmless propensities, without interfering with each other : although I must say, that those still-born quo-

tations of our messmate, Price, are most tryingly annoying."

"And so is a pinch of snuff in the eye, I can assure you," replied Macallan.

"Granted; but we must 'give and take,' doctor."

"In the present case, I don't care how much you take, provided you don't give," rejoined Macallan, recovering his good humour.

A messenger from Captain M——, who desired to speak with Macallan, put an end to the conversation.

"Mr. Macallan," said Captain M——, when the surgeon came into the cabin to receive his commands, "I am sorry to find, from letters which I have received, that the yellow fever is raging in the other islands in a most alarming manner, and that it has been communicated to the squadron on the station. I am sorry to add, that I have received a letter from the governor here, informing me that it has made its appearance at the barracks. I am afraid

that we have little chance of escaping so general a visitation. As it is impossible to put to sea, even if my orders were not decisive to the contrary, are there not some precautions which ought to be taken?"

"Certainly, Sir. It will be prudent to fumigate the lower deck; it has already been so well ventilated and whitewashed, that nothing else can be done; we must hope for the best."

"I do so," replied Captain M——; "but my hope is mingled with anxious apprehensions, which I cannot controul. We must do all we can, and leave the rest to Providence."

The fears of Captain M—— were but too well grounded. For some days, no symptoms of infection appeared on board of the *Aspasia*; but the ravages on shore, among the troops, were to such an extent, that the hospitals were filled, and those who were carried in might truly be said to have left hope behind. Rapid as was the mortality, it was still not rapid enough for the admittance of those who were

attacked with the fatal disease; and as the bodies of fifteen or twenty were, each succeeding evening, borne unto the grave, the continual decrease of the military cortége which attended the last obsequies, told the sad tale, that those who, but a day or two before, had followed the corpses of others, were now carried on their own biers.

Other vessels on the station, which had put to sea from the different isles, with the disappointed expectation of avoiding the contagion now came to an anchor in the bay, their crews so weakened by disease and death that they could with difficulty send up sufficient men to furl their sails. Boat after boat was sent on shore to the naval hospital, loaded with sufferers, until it became so crowded that no more could be received. Still the *Aspasia*, from the precautions which had been taken, in fumigating, and avoiding all unnecessary contact with the shipping and the shore, had for nearly a fortnight escaped the infection; but the miasma

was at last wafted to the frigate, and in the course of one night, fifteen men, who were in health the preceding evening, before eight o'clock on the following morning were lying in their hammocks under the half-deck. Before the close of that day, the number of patients had increased to upwards of forty. The hospitals were so crowded that Captain M—— agreed with Macallan that it would be better that the men should remain on board.

The frigate was anchored with springs on her cable, so as always to be able to warp her stern to the breeze; the cabin bulk-heads on the main-deck, and the thwart-ship bulk-heads below, were removed, and the stern windows and ports thrown open to admit a freer circulation of air than could have been obtained by riding with her head to the sullen breeze, which hardly deigned to fan the scorching cheeks of the numerous and exhausted patients. The numbers on the list daily increased, until every part of the ship was occupied with their

hammocks, and the surgeon and his assistants had scarcely time to relieve one by excessive bleeding, and consign him to his hammock, before another, staggering and fainting under the rapid disease, presented himself, with his arm bared, ready for the lancet. More blood was thrown into the stagnant water of the bay than would have sufficed to render ever verdant the laurels of many a well-fought action, (for our laurels flourish not from the dew of Heaven, but must be watered with a sanguine stream)—and, alas, too soon, more bodies were consigned to the deep, than would have been demanded from the frigate in the warmest proof of courage and perseverance in her country's cause.

It is a scene like this which appals the sailor's heart. It is not the range of hammocks on the main-deck, tenanted by pale forms, with their bandages steeped in gore; for such is the chance of war, and the blood has flowed from hearts boiling with ardour and devotion.

If not past cure, the smiles and congratulations of their shipmates alleviate the anguish and fever of the wound : if past all medical relief, still the passage from this transitory world is soothed by the affectionate sympathy of their messmates, by the promise to execute their last wishes, by the knowledge that it was in their country's defence they nobly fell. 'Tis not the chance of wreck, or of being consigned, unshrouded, to the dark wave, by the treacherous leak, or overwhelming fury of the storm. 'Tis not the "thought executing fire." Every and all of these they are prepared and are resigned to meet, as ills to which their devious track is heir. But when disease, in its most loathsome form and implacable nature, makes its appearance—when we contemplate, in perspective, our own fate in the unfortunate who is selected, like the struggling sheep, dragged from the hurdled crowd, to be pierced by the knife of the butcher—when the horror of infection becomes so strong that we hold aloof from administering the kind

offices of relief to our dearest friends; and, eventually prostrated ourselves, find the same regard for self pervades the rest, and that there is no voluntary attendance—then the sight of the expiring wretch, in his last effort, turning his head over the side of his hammock, and throwing off the dreadful black vomit, harbinger of his doom—'tis horrible ! too horrible !

And the anxiety which we would in vain suppress—the reckless laugh of some, raised but to conceal their fear from human penetration—the intoxicating draught, poured down by others to dull the excited senses—the follies of years reviewed in one short minute—our life, how spent,—how much to answer for!—a world, how overvalued—a God, how much neglected!—the feeling that we ought to pray, the inclination that propels us to do so, checked by the mistaken yet indomitable pride which puts the question to our manhood, “Will ye pray in fear, when ye neglected it in fancied security?” Down, stub-

born knees! Pride is but folly towards men—insanity towards God?”

But why dwell upon such a scene? Let it suffice to state, that seventy of the *Aspasia's* men fell victims to the baneful climate, and that many more, who did recover, were left in such a state of exhaustion, as to require their immediate return to their native shores. Except O'Keefe, the purser, all the officers whom I have introduced to the reader escaped. Three, from the midshipman's berth, who had served their time, and who for many months had been drinking the toast of, “A bloody war and sickly season,” fell a sacrifice to their own thoughtless and selfish desire; and the clerk, who anticipated promotion when he heard that the purser was attacked, died before him.

When all was over, Jerry observed to Prose, “Well, Prose, ‘it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.’ We have not had one single thrashing during the sickness; but I suppose,

now that their courage is returned, we must prepare for both principal and interest."

"Well, now, Jerry, I do declare that's very likely, but I never thought of it before."

The large convoys of merchantmen that came out, supplied the men that were required to man the disabled ships; and transports brought out cargoes from the dépôts to fill up the skeleton ranks of the different companies. Among the various blessings left us in this life of suffering, is forgetfulness of past evils, and the yellow fever was, in a short time, no longer the theme of dread, or even of conversation.

"Well, Tom, what sort of a place is this here West Hinges?" inquired a soldier, who had been just landed from a transport, to an old acquaintance in the regiment, whom he encountered.

"Capital place, Bill," returned the other to his interrogation; "plenty to drink, and always a-dry."

But as I do not wish to swell my narra-

tive, and have no doubt but the reader will be glad to leave this pestilential climate, I shall inform him, that for three years the Aspasia continued on the station, daily encountering the usual risks of battle, fire, and wreck; and that, at the end of that period, the health of Captain M—— was so much injured, by the climate and his own exertions, that he requested permission to quit the station.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sir Bash. This idol of my heart is—my own wife !

Love. Your own wife ?

Sir Bash. Yes, my own wife. 'Tis all over with me : I am undone.

The Way to Keep Him.

“ SHEW us something new.” Such was the cry of men at the time of the Prophet, and such it will continue until all prophecies are accomplished, all revelations confirmed. Man is constant in nought but inconsistency. He is directed to take pattern from the industrious bee, and lay up the sweet treasures which have been prepared for his use ; but he prefers the giddy

flight of the butterfly, pursuing his idle career from flower to flower, until, fatigued with the rapidity of his motions, he reposes for a time, and revolves in his mind where he shall bend his devious way in search of "something new."

This is the fatal propensity by which our first parents fell, and which, inherited by us, is the occasion of our follies and our crimes. "Were man but constant, he were perfect ;" but that he cannot be. He is aware of the dangers, the hardships, of travel—of the difference between offices performed by an interested and heartless world, and the sweet ministering of duty and affection. He feels that home, sweet home, is the heaven of such imperfect bliss as this world can bestow ; yet, wander he must, that he may appreciate its value : and although he hails it with rapture, soon after his return it palls upon him, and he quits it again in search of variety. Thus is man convinced of the beauty of Virtue, and acknowledges the peace that is to be found in her abode ; yet, propelled by the

restless legacy of our first parents, he wanders into the entangled labyrinths of vice—until, satisfied that all is vexation, he retraces his steps in repentance and disgust. Thus he passes his existence in sinning, repenting, and sinning again, in search of “something new.”

When Mr. Rainscourt was first separated from his wife, he felt himself released from a heavy burthen, which had oppressed him for years: or as if fetters, which had been long rivetted, had been knocked off; and he congratulated himself upon his regained liberty. Plunging at once into the depths of vice and dissipation, he sought pleasure after pleasure, variety upon variety,—all that life could offer, or money purchase: and for a time thought himself happy. But there are drawbacks which cannot be surmounted; and he who wholly associates with the vicious, must, more than any other, be exposed to the effects of depravity. He found man more than ever treacherous and ungrateful—woman more than ever deceiving—indulgence, cloying

—debauchery, enervating—and his constitution and his spirits exhausted by excess. Satiated with every thing, disgusted with every body, he sought for “something new.”

For more than two years he had not seen, and had hardly bestowed a thought upon, his wife and daughter, who still continued to reside at the mansion at ———. Not knowing what to do with himself, it occurred to him that the country air might recruit his health; and he felt a degree of interest, if not for his wife, at least for his daughter. He determined, therefore, to pay them a visit. The horses were ordered: and, to the astonishment of Mrs. Rainscourt, to whom he had given no intimation of his whim, and who looked upon a visit from her husband, in her retirement, as a visionary idea, Rainscourt made his appearance, just as she was about to sit down to dinner, in company with the McElvinas, and the vicar, who had become one of her most intimate associates.

If Rainscourt was pleased with the improvement of Emily, who was now more than fourteen

years old, how much more was he astonished at the appearance of his wife, who, to his eyes, seemed even handsomer, if possible, than on the day when he had led her to the altar. For more than two years, content, if not perfect happiness, had been Mrs. Rainscourt's lot. She had recovered her health, her bloom, and her spirits, and not having had any source of irritation, her serenity of temper had been regained; and Mrs. Rainscourt, to whose extreme beauty, from assuetude, he had before been blind, now appeared to him, after so long an absence, quite a different person from the one whom he had quitted with such indifference; and as he surveyed her, he seemed to feel that freshness of delight unknown to vitiated minds, except when successful in their search after "something new."

But Rainscourt was not altogether wrong in his idea that his wife was quite a different personage from the one which he had quitted. The vicar, who was acquainted with her situa-

tion, had not failed in his constant exertions for the improvement of mankind; he had, by frequent conversation, and inculcation of our christian duties, gradually softened her into a charitable and forgiving temper: and, now that she had no opportunity of exercising them, she had been made acquainted with the passive forbearance and humility constituting a part of the duties of a wife.

She met her husband with kindness and respect—while his daughter, who flew into his arms, proved that she had not been prepossessed against him, as he anticipated.

Pleased with his reception, and with the company that he happened to meet, Rainscourt experienced sensations which had long been dormant; and it occurred to him, that an establishment, with such an elegant woman as Mrs. Rainscourt at the head, and his daughter's beauty to grace it, would not only be more gratifying, but more reputable, than the course of life which he had lately pursued.

He made himself excessively agreeable—was pleased with the benevolent demeanour of the vicar—thought Susan a lovely young woman, and M^cElvina a delightful companion; and, when he retired to the chamber prepared for his reception, wondered that he had never thought of paying them a visit before.

It had been the intention of Rainscourt to have trespassed upon his wife's hospitality for one night only, and then have taken his departure for some fashionable watering place; but there seemed to be such an appearance of renewed friendship between him and Mrs. Rainscourt, that an invitation was given by the vicar, for the whole party, on the ensuing day, to meet at the vicarage, and this was followed up by another from M^cElvina, for the day afterwards, at his cottage. This decided Mr. Rainscourt to remain there a day or two longer.

But when the time of his departure arrived, Rainscourt was so pleased with his new acquaintance, so delighted with his daughter, and, to

his astonishment, so charmed by his wife, that he could not tear himself away.

Women are proverbially sharp-sighted in all where the heart is concerned, and Mrs. Rainscourt soon perceived that the admiration of her husband was not feigned. Gratified to find that she had not yet lost her attractions, and, either from a pardonable feeling of revenge at his desertion, or to prove to him that he was not aware of what he had rejected, she exerted all her powers to please; she was not only amiable, but fascinating: and after a sojourn of three weeks, which appeared but as many days, Rainscourt was reluctantly compelled to acknowledge to himself, that he was violently enamoured of his discarded wife.

He now felt that he should assume a higher station in society by being at the head of his own establishment, and that his consequence would be increased by the heiress of so large a property residing under his protection; and he thought that if he could persuade Mrs.

Rainscourt to live with him again, that he could be happy, and exercise, with pleasure, the duties of a father and a husband. Neither the vicar nor M^cElvina were ignorant of his feelings; and the former, who recollected that those whom God has joined no man should put asunder, had made up his mind to bring the affair, if possible, to a happy issue; and Rainscourt, who perceived the influence which the vicar possessed over his wife, determined to request that he would act as a mediator.

The vicar was delighted when Rainscourt called upon him one morning, and unfolded his wishes. To reconcile those who had been at variance, to restore a husband to his wife, a father to a daughter, was the earnest desire of the good man's heart. He accepted the office with pleasure; and in the course of the afternoon, while Rainscourt called upon the M^cElvinas, that he might be out of the way, proceeded upon his mission of peace and good will.

Mrs. Rainscourt, who was not surprised at the intelligence, listened to the vicar attentively, as he pointed out the necessity of forgiveness, if she hoped to be forgiven—of the conviction, in his own mind, that her husband was reformed—of the unpleasant remarks to which a woman who is separated from her husband must always be subjected—of the probability that the faults were not all on his side, and of the advantage her daughter would derive from their reunion: to which he entreated her to consent.

Mrs. Rainscourt was moved to tears. The conflict between her former love and her outraged feelings—the remembrance of his long neglect, opposed to his present assiduities—the stormy life she had passed in his company, and her repose of mind since their separation—weighed and balanced against each other so exactly, that the scale would turn on neither side.

She refused to give any decided answer, but requested a day or two for reflection; and the

vicar, who recollected the adage, that, in an affair of the heart, "the woman who deliberates is lost," left her with a happy presage that his endeavours would be crowned with success. But Mrs. Rainscourt would not permit her own heart to decide. It was a case in which she did not consider that a woman was likely to be a correct judge; and she had so long been on intimate terms with M^cElvina, that she resolved to lay the case before him, and be guided by his opinion.

The next day, Mrs. Rainscourt went to the cottage alone, and having requested Susan to exclude all visitors, entered into a full detail of all the circumstances which had occurred previous to her separation from her husband, and the decision that she was now called upon to make, from his importunity.

Susan, who felt that she was unable to advise, in a case of such importance to Mrs. Rainscourt's future happiness, immediately referred the matter to M^cElvina.

His answer was decided.

“ I should be sorry, Mrs. Rainscourt, to give an opinion in opposition to that of the worthy vicar, did I not conceive that his slight knowledge of the world would, in this instance, tend to mislead both himself and you. Before Mr. Rainscourt had remained here a week, I prophesied, as Susan will corroborate, that this proposal would be made. Aware of his general character, and of the grounds of your separation, I took some pains to ingratiate myself, that I might ascertain his real sentiments; and, with regret I express my conviction, that his prepossession in your favour, strong as it really is at present, will prove but transitory, and that possession would only subject you to future insults. He is *not* reformed; but, satiated with other enjoyments, and fascinated with your attractions, his feelings towards you are those of renewed inclination, and not arising from conviction, or remorse at his unprincipled career.

You are happy at present—your refusal may, by stimulating his attentions, increase your happiness ; but if you yield, it will only be a source of misery to you both. Such is my opinion. Do not let him know that I have influenced you, or it will interrupt an intimacy, which I shall follow up, I trust, to your advantage ; therefore, give no answer at present, nor while he remains here : for I perceive that he is a violent man when thwarted in his wishes. Demand a fortnight's consideration after he is gone, and then you will be able to decide from reflection, without being biassed against your own judgment, by his working upon feelings which, to the honour of women, when the heart is concerned, spurn at the cold reasonings of prudence and worldly wisdom.”

The advice of the man of the world prevailed over that of the man of God ; and Rainscourt, after waiting in town, with impatience, for the answer, received a decided but kind

refusal. He tore the letter into fragments, with indignation, and set off for Cheltenham, more violently in love with his wife than he was before her rejection of him.

CHAPTER XVII.

Great Negative ! how vainly would the wise
Enquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,
Did'st thou not stand to point their dull philosophies.

ROCHESTER's *Ode to "Nothing."*

SHOULD you feel half as tired with reading as I am with writing, I forgive you, with all my heart, if you throw down the book, and read no more. I have written too fast—I have quite *sprained* my imagination—for you must know that this is all *fiction*, every word of it. Yet I do not doubt but there are many who will find out who the characters are meant for, notwith-

standing my assertion to the contrary. Well, be it so. It's a very awkward position to have to write a chapter of sixteen pages, without materials for more than two; at least I find it so. Some people have the power of spinning out a trifle of matter, covering a large surface with a grain of ore—like the gold-beater, who, out of a single guinea, will compose a score of books. I wish I could.

Is there nothing to give me an idea? I've racked my sensorium internally to no purpose. Let me look round the cabin for some external object to act as a fillip to an exhausted imagination. A little thing will do.—Well, here's an *ant*! That's quite enough. *Commençons.*

“Home-keeping youths have ever homely wits,” they say; but much as travel by land may enlarge the mind, it never can be expanded to the utmost of its capabilities, until it has also peregrinated by water. I believe that not only the human intellect, but the instinct of brutes, is enlarged by going to sea.

The ant which attracted my attention is one of a nest in my cabin, whose labours I often superintend : and I defy any ants, in any part of the four continents, or wherever land may be, to shew an equal knowledge of mechanical power. I do not mean to assert that there is originally a disproportion of intellect between one animal and another of the same species ; but I consider that the instinct of animals is capable of expansion, as well as the reason of man. That ants on shore would, if it were required, be equally assisted by their instinct, I believe ; but not being required, it is not brought into play : and, therefore as I before observed, they have not the resources of which my little colony at present are in possession.

Now I will kill a cockroach for them ; there is no difficulty in finding one, unfortunately for me, for they gnaw everything that I have. There never was a class of animals so indifferent to their fare, whether it be paper, or snuff, or soap, or cloth. Like Time, they devour everything.

The scoundrels have nearly demolished two dozen antibilious pills. I hope they will remember Dr. Vance as long as they live.

Well, here's one—a fine one. I throw his crushed carcass on the deck, and observe the ants have made their nest in the beams over my head, from which I infer, that the said beams are not quite so sound as they should be. An ant has passed by the carcass, and is off on a gallop to give notice. He meets two or three—stops a second—and passes on. Now the tide flows; it's not above a minute since I threw the cockroach down, and now it is surrounded by hundreds. What a bustle!—what running to and fro! They must be giving orders. See, there are fifty at least, who lay hold of each separate leg of the monster, who in bulk is equal to eight thousand of them. The body moves along with rapidity, and they have gained the side of the cabin. Now for the ascent. See how those who hold the lower legs have quitted them, and pass over to assist the others at the upper. As there

is not room for all to lay hold of the creature's legs, those who cannot, fix their forceps round the bodies of the others, *double-banking* them, as we call it. Away they go, up the side of the ship—a steady pull, and all together. But now the work becomes more perilous, for they have to convey the body to their nest over my head, which is three feet from the side of the ship. How can they possibly carry that immense weight, walking with their heads downwards, and clinging with their feet to the beams? Observe how carefully they turn the corner—what bustle and confusion in making their arrangements! Now they start. They have brought the body head-and-stern with the ship, so that all the legs are exactly opposed to each other in the direction which they wish to proceed. One of the legs on the fore side is advanced to its full stretch, while all the others remain stationary. That leg stops, and the ants attached to it hold on with the rest, while another of the foremost legs is advanced. Thus they continue, until

all the foremost are out and the body of the animal is suspended by its legs at its full stretch. Now one of the hindmost legs closes in to the body, while all the others hold on—now another, and another, each in their turn; and by this skilful manœuvre they have contrived to advance the body nearly an inch along the ceiling. One of the foremost legs advances again, and they proceed as before.

Could your shore-going ants have managed this? I have often watched them, when a boy, because my grandmother used to make me do so; in later years, because I delighted in their industry and perseverance; but, alas! in neither case did I profit by their example.

“Now, Freddy,” the old lady would say, giving her spectacles a preparatory wipe, as she basked in a summer evening’s sun, after a five o’clock tea, “fetch a piece of bread and butter, and we will see the ants work. Lord bless the boy, if he hasn’t thrown down a whole slice. Why do you waste good victuals in that way?”

Who do you think's to eat it, after it has been on the gravel? There, pinch a bit off, and throw it down. Put the rest back upon the plate—it will do for the cat.”

But these ants were no more to be compared to mine, than a common labourer is to the engineer who directs the mechanical powers which raise mountains from their foundation. My old grandmother would never let me escape until the bread and butter was in the hole ; and, what was worse, I had then to listen to the moral inference which was drawn, and which took up more time than the ants did to draw the bread and butter—all about industry, and what not ; a long story, partly her own, partly borrowed from Solomon ; but it was labour in vain. I could not understand why, because ants liked bread and butter, I must like my book. She was an excellent old woman ; but, nevertheless, many a time did I have a fellow-feeling with the boy in the caricature print, who is sitting with his old grandmother and the cat, and says, “ I

wish one of us three were dead. It an't I—and it an't you, pussy.”

Well, she died at last, full of years and honour ; and I was summoned from school to attend her funeral. My uncle was much affected, for she had been an excellent mother. She might have been so ; but I, graceless boy, could not perceive her merits as a *grandmother*, and shewed a great deal of fortitude upon the occasion. I recollect a circumstance attendant upon her funeral, which, connected as it was with a subsequent one, has since been the occasion of serious reflection upon the trifling causes which will affect the human mind, when prostrate under affliction. My grandmother's remains were consigned to an old family vault, not far from the river. When the last ceremonies had been paid, and the coffin was being lowered into the deep receptacle of generations which had passed away, I looked down, and it was full of water, nearly up to the arch of the vault. Observing my surprise, and perceiving the cause, my uncle

was much annoyed at the circumstance; but it was too late—the cords had been removed, and my grandmother had sunk to the bottom. My uncle interrogated the sexton after the funeral service was over.

“Why, Sir, it’s because it’s high water now in the river; she will be all dry before the evening.”

This made the matter worse. If she was all adry in the evening, she would be all afloat again in the morning. It was no longer a place of rest, and my uncle’s grief was much increased by the idea. For a long while afterwards, he appeared uncommonly thoughtful at spring tides.

But although his grief yielded to time, the impression was not to be effaced. Many years afterwards, a fair cousin was summoned from the world, before she had time to enter upon the duties imposed upon the sex, or be convinced, from painful experience, that to die is gain. It

was then I perceived that my uncle had contracted a sort of *post mortem* hydrophobia. He fixed upon a church, on the top of a hill, and ordered a vault to be dug, at a great expense, out of the solid chalk, under the chancel of the church. There it would not only be dry below, but even defended from the rain above. It was finished—and (the last moisture to which she was ever to be subjected) the tears of affection were shed over her remains, by those who lost and loved her. When the ceremony was over, my uncle appeared to look down into the vault with a degree of satisfaction. “There,” said he, “she will lie as dry as possible, till the end of time.” And I really believe that this conviction on his part went further to console him than even the aid of religion, or the ministering of affection. He often commented upon it, and as often as he did so, I thought of my old grandmother and the spring tides.

I had an odd dream the other night, about

my own burial and subsequent state—which was so diametrically opposite to my uncle's ideas of comfort, that I will relate it here.

I was dead ; but, either from politeness or affection, I knew not which, the spirit still lingered with the body, and had not yet taken its flight, although the tie between them had been dissolved. I had been killed in action : and the first-lieutenant of the ship, with mingled feelings of sorrow and delight—sorrow at my death, which was a tribute that I did not expect from him, and delight at his assumed promotion, for the combat had been brought to a successful issue—read the funeral service which consigned me and some twenty others, sewed up in hammocks, to the deep, into which we descended with one simultaneous rush.

I thought that we soon parted company from each other, and, all alone, I continued to sink, sink, sink, until at last I could sink no deeper. I was suspended, as it were ; I had taken my exact position in the scale of gra-

vity, and I lay floating upon the condensed and buoyant fluid, many hundred fathoms below the surface. I thought to myself, "Here then am I to lie in pickle, until I am awakened." It was quite dark, but by the spirit I saw as plain as if it were noon-day: and I perceived objects in the water, which gradually increased in size. They were sharks, in search of prey. They attacked me furiously; and as they endeavoured to drag me out of my canvas cerements, I whirled round and round, as their flat noses struck against my sides. At last they succeeded. In a moment, I was dismembered, without the least pain, for pain had been left behind me in the world from which I had been released. One separated a leg, with his sharp teeth, and darted away north; another an arm, and steered south; each took his portion, and appeared to steer away in a different direction, as if he did not wish to be interrupted in his digestion.

"Help yourselves, gentlemen, help your-

selves," mentally exclaimed I; "but if Mr. Young is correct in his 'Night Thoughts,' where am I to fumble for my bones, when they are to be forthcoming?" Nothing was left but my head, and that, from superior gravity, continued to sink gyrating in its descent so as to make me feel quite giddy: but it had not gone far, before one, who had not received his portion, darted down upon it perpendicularly, and as the last fragment of me rolled down his enormous gullet, the spirit fled, and all was darkness and oblivion.

But I have digressed sadly from the concatenation of ideas. The ant made me think of my grandmother,—my grandmother of my uncle,—my uncle of my cousin,—and her death of my dream, for "We are such stuff as dreams are made of, and our little lives are rounded with a sleep." But I had not finished all I had to say relative to the inferior animals. When on board of a man-of-war, not only is their instinct expanded, but they almost change their nature

from their immediate contact with human beings, and become tame in an incredibly short space of time. Man had dominion given unto him over the beasts of the field; the fiercest of the feline race will not attack, but avoid him, unless goaded on by the most imperious demands of hunger: and it is a well known fact, that there is a power in the eye of man, to which all other animals quail. What then must it be to an animal who is brought on board, and is in immediate collision with hundreds, whose fearless eyes meet his in every direction in which he turns, and whose behaviour towards him corresponds with their undaunted looks? The animal is subdued at once. I remember a leopard which was permitted to run loose after he had been three days on board, although it was thought necessary to bring him in an iron cage. He had not been in the ship more than a fortnight, when I observed the captain of the after-guard rubbing the nose of the animal against the

deck, for some offence which he had committed.

“Why, you have pretty well brought that gentleman to his bearings,” observed I; “he’s as tame as a puppy.”

“Tame! why, Sir, he knows better than to be otherwise. I wish the *Hemp’rer of Maroccy* would send us on board a *cock rhinoceros*—we’d tame him in a week.”

And I believe the man was correct in his assertion.

The most remarkable change of habit that I ever witnessed, was in a wether sheep, on board of a frigate, during the last war. He was one of a stock which the captain had taken on board for a long cruise, and being the only survivor, during the time that the ship was refitting he had been allowed to run about the decks, and had become such a favourite with the ship’s company, that the idea of his being killed, even when short of fresh provisions, never even entered

into the head of the captain. Jack, for such was his cognomen, lived entirely with the men, being fed with biscuit from the different messes. He knew the meaning of the different pipes of the boatswain's mates, and always went below when they piped to breakfast, dinner, or supper. But amongst other peculiarities, he would chew tobacco and drink grog. Is it to be wondered, therefore, that he was a favourite with the sailors? That he at first did this from obedience, is possible; but eventually, he was as fond of grog as any of the men: and when the pipe gave notice of serving it out, he would run aft to the tub, and wait his turn—for an extra half pint of water was, by general consent, thrown into the tub when the grog was mixed, that Jack might have his regular allowance. From habit, the animal knew exactly when his turn came. There were eighteen messes in the ship: and as they were called, by the purser's steward, or sergeant of

marines, in rotation,—first mess, second mess, &c.,—after the last mess was called Jack presented himself at the tub, and received his allowance.

Now it sometimes occurred that a mess, when called, would miss its turn, by the man deputed to receive the liquor not being present: upon which occasion, the other messes were served in rotation, and the one who had not appeared to the call was obliged to wait till after all the rest; but a circumstance of this kind always created a great deal of mirth: for the sheep, who knew that it was his turn after the eighteenth, or last mess, would butt away any one who attempted to interfere; and if the party persevered in being served before Jack, he would become quite outrageous, flying at the offender and butting him forward into the galley, and sometimes down the hatchway, before his anger could be appeased—from which it would appear that the animal was passionately fond of spirits. This I consider as great a change in the nature of a ruminating animal, as can well be imagined.

I could mention many instances of this kind, but I shall reserve them till I have grown older ; then I will be as garrulous as Montaigne. As it is, I think I hear the reader say,—“ All this may be very true, but what has it to do with the novel ? ” Nothing, I grant ; but it has a great deal to do with *making a book*,—for I have completed a whole chapter out of nothing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

————— And with a flowing sail
Went bounding for the island of the free,
Towards which the impatient wind blew half a gale;
High dash'd the spray, the bows dipp'd in the sea.

BYRON.

AFTER a run of six weeks, the *Aspasia* entered the channel. The weather, which had been clear during the passage home, now altered its appearance; and a dark sky, thick fog, and mizzling cold rain, intimated their approach to the English shore. But, relaxed as they had been by three years' endurance of a tropical sun, it was nevertheless a source of congratulation,

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rather than complaint; for it was "regular November channel weather," and was associated with their propinquity to those homes and fire-sides, which would be enhanced in value from the ordeal to be passed before they could be enjoyed.

"Hah!" exclaimed an old quarter-master, who had served the earlier part of his life in a coaster, as he buttoned his pea jacket up to the throat; "this is what I calls something like; none of your d——d blue skies here."

Such is the power of affection, whether of person or of things, that even faults become a source of endearment.

As the short day closed, the *Aspasia*, who was running before the wind and slanting rain, which seemed to assist her speed with its gravity, hove to, and tried for soundings.

"Well, Stewart, what's the news?" said one of the midshipmen, as he entered the berth; the drops of rain, which hung upon the rough exterior of his great coat, glittering like small

diamonds, from the reflection of the solitary candle, which made darkness but just visible.

“News!” replied Stewart, taking off his hat with a jerk, so as to besprinkle the face of Prose with the water that had accumulated on the top of it, and laughing at his sudden start from the unexpected shower; “why, as the fellows roar out with the second edition of an evening paper, ‘great news, glorious news!’—and all comprised in a short sentence:—Soundings in seventy-four fathoms; grey sand and shells.”

“Huzza!” answered the old master’s mate. “Now for three cheers—and then for the song.”

The three cheers having been given with due emphasis, if not discretion, they all stood up round the table. “Now, my boys, keep time. Mr. Prose, if you attempt to chime in with your confounded nasal twang, I’ll give you a squeeze.”

“ For England, when, with favoring gale,
Our gallant ship up Channel steered,
And, scudding under easy sail,
The high blue western land appeared,
To heave the lead the seaman sprung,
And to the watchful pilot sung,
By the deep *nine*.”

The song, roared out in grand chorus by the midshipmen, was caught up, after the first verse, by the marines in their berth, close to them ; and from them passed along the lower deck as it continued, so that the last stanzas were sung by nearly two hundred voices, sending forth a volume of sound, that penetrated every recess in the vessel, and entered into the responsive bosoms of all on board, not excepting the captain himself, who smiled, as he bent over the break of the gangway, at what he would have considered a breach of subordination in the ship's company, had not he felt that it arose from that warm attachment to their country which had created our naval pre-eminence.

The song ended with tumultuous cheering fore and aft, and not *until then* did the captain

send down to request that the noise might be discontinued. As soon as it was over, the grog was loudly called for in the midshipman's berth, and made its appearance.

"Here's to the white cliffs of England," cried one, drinking off his full tumbler, and turning it upside down on the table.

"Here's to the Land of Beauty."

"Here's to the Emerald Isle."

"And here's to the Land of Cakes," cried Stewart, drinking off his tumbler, and throwing it over his shoulder.

"Six for one for skylarking," cried Prose.

"A hundred for one, you d——d cockney, for all I care."

"No—no—no," cried all the berth; "not *one* for *one*."

"You shall have a song for it, my boys," cried Stewart, who immediately commenced, with great taste and execution, the beautiful air—

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne?"

“Well, I’ve not had my toast yet,” said Jerry, when the applause at the end of the song had discontinued:—“Here’s to the shady side of Pall-mall.”

“And I suppose,” said Stewart, giving Prose a slap on the back, which took his breath away, “that you are thinking of Wapping, blow you.”

“I think I’ve had enough of wapping since I’ve been in this ship,” answered Prose.

“Why, Prose, you’re quite brilliant, I do declare,” observed Jerry. “Like a flint, you only require a blow from Stewart’s iron fist to emit sparks. Try him again, Stewart. He’s like one of the dancing dervishes, in the Arabian Nights; you must thrash him, to get a few farthings of wit out of him.”

“I do wish that you would keep your advice to yourself, Jerry.”

“My dear Prose, it’s all for the honour of Middlesex that I wish you to shine. I’m convinced that there’s a great deal of wit in that head of yours; but it’s confined, like the kernel

in a nut ; there's no obtaining it without breaking the shell. Try him again, Stewart."

"Come, Prose, I'll take your part, and try his own receipt upon himself. I'll thrash him till he says something witty."

"I do like that, amazingly," replied Jerry. "Why, if I do say a good thing, you'll never find it out. I shall be thrashed to all eternity. Besides, I'm at too great a distance from you."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, I'm like some cows, I don't give down my milk without the calf is alongside of me. Now, if you were on this side of the table —"

"Which I am," replied Stewart, as he sprang over it, and seizing Jerry by the neck—"Now, Mr. Jerry, say a good thing directly."

"Well, promise me to understand it. We are just in the reverse situation of England and Scotland, after the battle of Culloden."

"What do you mean by that, you wretch?" cried Stewart, whose wrath was kindled by the reference.

“Why, I’m in your clutches, just like Scotland was—a conquered country.”

“You lie, you little blackguard,” cried Stewart, pinching Jerry’s neck till he forced his mouth open; “Scotland was never conquered.”

“Well, then,” continued Jerry, whose bile was up, as soon as Stewart relaxed his hold; “I’m like King Charles in the hands of the Scotch. How much was it that you sold him for?”

Jerry’s shrivelled carcass sounded like a drum, from the blow which he received for this second insult to Stewart’s idolized native land. As soon as he could recover his speech, “Well, haven’t I been very witty? Are you content, or will you have some more? or will you try Prose, and see whether you can draw blood out of a turnip?”

Stewart, who seemed disinclined to have any more elegant extracts from Jerry, resumed his former seat by Prose, who appeared to be in deep reflection.

“Well, Prose, are you thinking of your friends in Cheapside !”

“And suppose I am, Stewart? We have the same feelings in the city that you have in the heather ; and although I do not, like you, pretend to be allied to former kings, yet one may love one’s father and mother, brothers and sisters, without being able to trace back to one’s great grandfather. I never disputed your high pretensions ; why, then, interfere with my humble claims to the common feelings of humanity ?”

“I am rebuked, Prose,” replied Stewart ; “you shall have my glass of grog for that speech, for you never made a better. . Give me your hand, my good fellow.”

“I am glad that you, at last, shew some symptoms of reason,” observed the still indignant Jerry, standing close to the door. “I have some hopes of your Majesty yet, after such an extraordinary concession on your part. You must have great reason to be proud that you are able to trace your pedigree up to a border

chieftain, who sallied forth on the foray, when the spurs were dished up for his dinner; or, in plain words, went a cattle stealing, and robbing those who could not resist. It might then be considered a mark of prowess; but times are altered now: and if your celebrated ancestor lived in the present time, why" (continued Jerry, pointing his finger under his left ear) "he would receive what he well deserved, that's all."

"By Him that made me, get out of my reach, if you do not wish me to murder you!" cried Stewart, pale with rage.

"I took care of that," replied Jerry, "before I ventured to give my opinion; and now that I'm ready for a start, I'll give you a piece of advice. Trace your ancestors as far back as you can, as long as they have continued to be honest men,—if you don't stop there, you are a *fool*"—and Jerry very prudently made his escape at the conclusion of his sentence.

"The hour of retribution will come," cried

Stewart after Jerry, as the latter sprung up the ladder; but it did not, for when they met next morning, it was to feast their eyes upon the chalky cliffs of the Isle of Wight, as the *Aspasia* steered for the Needles. There are two events on board of a man-of-war, after which, injuries are forgotten, apologies are offered and received, intended duels are suppressed, hands are exchanged in friendship, and good will drives away long cherished animosity. One is, after an action—another, upon the sight of native land, after a protracted absence.

Jerry fearlessly ranged up alongside of Stewart, as he looked over the gangway.

“We shall be at anchor by twelve o’clock.”

“You may bless your stars for it,” replied Stewart, with a significant smile.

The *Aspasia* now ran through the Needles, and having successively passed by Hurst Castle, Cowes, and the entrance to Southampton Water, brought up at Spithead in seven fathoms. The sails were furled, the ship was moored, the

boat was manned, and Captain M—— went on shore to report himself to the Port Admiral, and deliver his despatches. When the boat returned, it brought off letters which had been awaiting the arrival of the ship. One informed Jerry of the death of his father, and of his being in possession of a fortune which enabled him to retire from the service. Another, from the Admiralty, announced the promotion of Stewart to the rank of lieutenant; and one from M^cElvina to our hero, inviting him to take up his quarters at his house, as long as the service would permit, stating that Captain M—— had been written to, to request that he might be allowed leave of absence.

As soon as Captain M—— had received an answer from the Admiralty, he returned on board, and acquainted his officers that he had obtained leave to remain on shore for some time, for the re-establishment of his health, and that another captain would be appointed to the ship. He turned the hands up, and addressed the ship's

company, thanking them for their good behaviour while under his command, and expressing his hopes, that upon his re-appointment, he should find them all alive and well. The first-lieutenant, to his great surprise and delight, was presented with his rank as commander, which Captain M—— had solicited from the Admiralty. The men were dismissed, and Captain M——, bidding farewell to his officers, descended the side and shoved off. As soon as the boat was clear of the frigate, the men, without orders, ran up, and manning the shrouds, saluted him with three farewell cheers. Captain M—— took off his hat to the compliment, and, muffling up his face with his boat cloak to conceal his emotion, the boat pulled for the shore.

Seymour, who was in the boat, followed his captain to the inn; who informed him, that he had obtained his discharge into a guard-ship, that his time might go on, and leave of absence for two months, which he might spend with his

friend, M^cElvina. Captain M—— then dismissed him with a friendly shake of the hand, desiring him to write frequently, and to draw upon his agent if he required any pecuniary assistance.

Seymour's heart was full, and he could not answer his kind protector. He returned on board, and bidding farewell to his messmates, the next evening he had arrived at the cottage of M^cElvina.

That his reception was cordial it is hardly necessary to state. M^cElvina, whose marriage had not been blessed with a family, felt towards our hero as if he was his own child; and Susan was delighted with the handsome exterior and winning manners of the lad, whose boyish days had often been the theme of her husband's conversation.

If the reader will take the trouble to reckon with his fingers, he will find that William Seymour is now sixteen years old. If he will not, he must take my word for it; and it may

also be as well to inform him, that Miss Rainscourt is more than fourteen. I am the more particular in mentioning these chronological facts, because in the next chapter I intend to introduce the parties to each other.

CHAPTER XIX.

— A strong bull stands threat'ning furious war :
He flourishes his horns, looks sourly round,
And, hoarsely bellowing, traverses his ground.

BLACKMORE.

It was on the second day after the arrival of Seymour, that Emily, who was not aware of the addition to the party at the cottage, proceeded on foot through the park and field adjacent, to pay Susan a visit. She was attended by a manservant, in livery, who carried some books, which Mrs. M^cElvina had expressed a desire to read. When Emily had arrived at the last

field, which was rented by a farmer hard by, she was surprised to perceive that it was occupied by an unpleasant tenant, to wit, a large bull ; who, on their approach, commenced pawing the ground, and shewing every symptom of hostility. She quickened her pace, and as the animal approached, found that she had gained much nearer to the stile before her than to the one which she had just passed over, and, frightened as she was, she determined to proceed. The servant who accompanied her manifested more fear than she did. As the bull approached, Emily, who had heard what precautions should be taken in a similar exigence, turned her face towards the animal, and walked backwards to the stile. The domestic seemed determined to preserve the exact station which his duty and respect required, and kept himself behind his young mistress. As, however, the bull advanced, and seemed inclined to charge upon them, his fears would not permit him to remain in that situation, and throwing down the books,

he took to his heels, and ran for a gap in the hedge. By this manœuvre Emily was left to make any arrangements she pleased with the infuriated animal.

But the bull had no quarrel with a lady, dressed in a white muslin frock ; he had taken offence at the red plush inexpressibles, which were a part of the family livery, and immediately ran at the servant, passing Emily without notice. The terrified man threw himself in an agony of fright into the gap, but was so paralysed with fear that he had not strength to force his passage through. With his head and shoulders on the other side of the hedge, there he stuck on his hands and knees, offering a fair target to the bull, who flew at it with such violence, that he forced him several yards into the opposite field. Senseless and exhausted, he lay there more from fear than injury, while the roaring bull paced up and down the hedge, with his tail in the air, attempting in vain to force a passage in pursuit of the object of his detestation.

The mind of woman is often more powerful than her frame; and the one will bear up against circumstances in which the other will succumb. Thus it was with Emily, who reached the stile, clambered over it with difficulty, and obtaining the house of M^cElvina, which was but a few yards distant, felt that her powers failed her as soon as exertion was no longer required. With difficulty she perceived with her swimming eyes that there was a gentleman in the parlour; and faintly exclaiming, "O! Mr. M^cElvina!" fell senseless into the arms of William Seymour.

Mr. and Mrs. M^cElvina were not at home: they had walked to the vicarage; and Seymour, who was very busy finishing a sketch of the Aspasia for his hostess, had declined accompanying them in their visit. His surprise at finding a young lady in his arms, may easily be imagined; but great as was his surprise, his distress was greater, from the extreme novelty

of the situation. It was not that he was unaccustomed to female society : on the contrary, his captain had introduced him everywhere in the different ports of the colonies in which they had anchored ; and perhaps there is no better society, although limited, than is to be met with at the table of a colonial governor ; but here it was quite different. He had been habituated to follow in the wake, as the lady governess made sail for the dining-room, the whole fleet forming two lines abreast in close order, and then coming to an anchor, in beautiful precision, to attack the dinner, which surrendered at discretion. He had been habituated to the ball-room, where the ladies glided over the chalked floor, like so many beautiful yachts plying in Southampton Water on a fine day ; he had tried his rate of sailing down the middle of a country-dance with some fair partner ; and tacked and wore as required to the mazes of pousette and right and left. This was all plain sailing ; but the case was now

quite different. Here was a strange sail, who had not even shewn her number, taken aback in stays, and on her beam-ends in a squall.

Seymour knew nothing about fainting. Sometimes a man had fits on board ship, (although invariably discharged when it was known); but the only remedy, in a man-of-war, in such cases, was to lay the patient down between the guns, and let him come to at his own leisure. It was impossible to act so in this case, and Seymour, as he bent over the beautiful pale countenance of Emily, felt that he never could be tired of holding her in his arms. However, as it was necessary that something should be done, he laid her down on the sofa, and, seizing the bell-rope, pulled it violently for assistance. The wire had been previously slackened, and the force which Seymour used brought down the rope without ringing the bell. There was but one in the room: and, not choosing to leave Emily, he was again compelled to rely on his own resources. What was good for her? Water?

There was none in the room, except what he had been painting with, and that was desperately discoloured with the Indian ink. Nevertheless, he snatched up his large brush which he used for washing-in his skies, and commenced painting her face and temples with the discoloured water ; but without producing the desired effect of re-animation.

What next ?—Oh, salts and burnt feathers ; he had read of them in a novel. Salts he had none—burnt feathers were to be procured. There were two live birds, called cardinals, belonging to Mrs. M^cElvina, in a cage near the window, and there was also a stuffed green parrot in a glass case. Seymour shewed his usual presence of mind in his decision. The tails of the live birds would in all probability grow again ; that of the stuffed parrot never could. He put his hand into the cage, and, seizing the fluttering proprietors, pulled out both their long tails, and having secured the door of the cage, thrust the ends of the feathers into the fire,

and applied them, frizzing and spluttering, to the nostrils of Emily. But they were replaced in the fire again and again, until they would emit no more smoke, and Emily still continued in a state of insensibility. There was no help for it—the parrot, which he knew Mrs. M^cElvina was partial to, must be sacrificed. A blow with the poker demolished the glass, and the animal was wrenched off its perch, and the tail inserted between the bars of the grate. But burnt feathers were of no use ; and Seymour, when he had burnt down the parrot's tail to the stump, laid it upon the table in despair.

He now began to be seriously alarmed, and the beauty of the object heightened his pity and commiseration. His anxiety increased to that degree that, losing his presence of mind, and giving way to his feelings, he apostrophized the inanimate form, and, hanging over it with the tenderness of a mother over her lifeless child, as a last resource, kissed its lips again and again with almost frantic anxiety. At the time

of his most eager application of this last remedy, M^cElvina and Susan entered the room, without his being aware of their approach.

The parrot on the table, with his tail, still burning like a slow match, first caught their eyes: and as they advanced further in, there was Seymour, to their astonishment, kissing a young lady, to whom he had never been introduced, and who appeared to be quite passive to his endearments.

“Seymour!” cried M^cElvina,—“what is all this?”

“I’m glad you’ve come; I cannot bring her to. I’ve tried every thing.”

“So it appears. Why, you’ve smothered her—she’s black in the face,” replied M^cElvina, observing the marks of the Indian ink upon Emily’s cheek.

Susan, who immediately perceived the condition of Emily, applied her salts, and desired M^cElvina to call the women. In a few minutes, whether it was that the remedies were more

effectual, or nature had resumed her powers, Emily opened her eyes, and was carried up stairs into Mrs. M^cElvina's room.

We must return to the servant, who, with no other injury than a severe contusion of the os coccygis, from the frontal bones of the bull, recovered his senses and his legs at the same moment, and never ceased exerting the latter, until he arrived at — Hall, where he stated, what indeed he really believed to be the case, that Miss Emily had been gored to death by the bull; asserting, at the same time, what was equally incorrect, that he had nearly been killed himself in attempting her rescue. The tidings were communicated to Mrs. Rainscourt, who, frantic at the intelligence, without bonnet or shawl, flew down the park towards the fields, followed by all the servants of the establishment, armed with guns, pitchforks, and any other weapons that they could obtain, at the moment of hurry and trepidation. They arrived at the field—the bull was there, waiting for

them at the stile, for he had observed them at a distance, and as he was now opposed to half-a-dozen pair of red inexpressibles, instead of one, his wrath was proportionally increased. He pawed the ground, bellowed, and made divers attempts to leap the stile, which, had he effected, it is probable that more serious mischief would have occurred. The whole party stood aghast, while Mrs. Rainscourt screamed, and called for her child—her child; and attempted to recover her liberty, from the arms of those who held her, and rush into the field to her own destruction.

The farmer to whom the animal belonged, had heard his bellowing on the first assault, and had come out to ascertain the cause. He was just in time to behold the footman pushed through the hedge, and to witness the escape of Emily into the house of M'Elvina. Intending to remove the animal, he returned to his dinner, when his resumed bellowing summoned him again, and perceiving the cause, he joined the

party, and, addressing Mrs. Rainscourt, "The young lady is all safe, Ma'am, in the gentleman's house yonder. The brute's quiet enough; it's all along of them red breeches that angers him. A bull can't abide 'em, Ma'am."

"Safe, do you say? Thank God. Oh! take me to her."

"This way, Ma'am, then," said the farmer, leading her round the hedge to the cottage of M^cElvina, by a more circuitous way.

Susan had just called up M^cElvina, and Seymour was again left to himself in the parlour, when Mrs. Rainscourt, bursting from those who conducted her, tottered in, and sunk exhausted on the sofa. Seymour, to whom the whole affair was a mystery, and who had been ruminating upon it, and upon the sweet lips which he had pressed, in utter astonishment cried out, "What! another?" Not chusing, in this instance, to trust to his own resources, he contented himself with again shoving the parrot's tail between the bars, and as he held it to his patient's nose,

loudly called out for M^cElvina, who, summoned by his appeals, with many others, entered the room, and relieved him of his charge, who soon recovered, and joined her daughter in the room up stairs.

The carriage had been sent for to convey Mrs. Rainscourt and her daughter home. When they came down into the parlour, previous to their departure, Seymour was formally introduced, and received the thanks of Mrs. Rainscourt for the attention which he had paid to her daughter, and a general invitation to the hall.

Emily, to whom Susan had communicated the panacea to which Seymour had ultimately resorted, blushed deeply as she smiled her adieus; and our hero, as the carriage whirled away, felt a sensation as new to him as that of Cymon, when ignited by the rays of beauty, which flashed from the sleeping Iphigenia.

CHAPTER XX.

Idiots only will be couzened twice.

DRYDEN.

SEYMOUR did not fail to profit by the invitation extended by Mrs. Rainscourt, and soon became the inseparable companion of Emily. His attentions to her were a source of amusement to the M^cElvinas and her mother, who thought little of a flirtation between a midshipman of sixteen and a girl that was two years his junior. The two months' leave of absence having

expired, Seymour was obliged to return to the guard-ship, on the books of which his name had been enrolled. It was with a heavy heart that he bade farewell to the M^cElvinas. He had kissed away the tears of separation from the cheeks of Emily, and their young love, unalloyed as that between a brother and sister, created an uneasy sensation in either heart which absence could not remove.

When our hero reported himself to the commanding officer of the guard-ship, he was astonished at his expressing a total ignorance of his belonging to her, and sent down for the clerk, to know if his name was on the books.

The clerk, a spare, middle-sized personage, remarkably spruce and neat in his attire, and apparently about forty years of age, made his appearance, with the open list under his arm, and, with a humble bow to the first-lieutenant, laid it upon the capstern-head, and running

over several pages, from the top to the bottom, with his finger, at last discovered our hero's name.

"It's all right, young gentleman," said the first-lieutenant. "Take him down to the berth, Mr. Skrimmage, and introduce him. You've brought your hammock, of course, and it is to be hoped that your chest has a good lock upon it, if not, I can tell you you'll not find all your clothes tally with your division list by to-morrow morning. But we cannot help these things here. We are but a sort of a 'thoroughfare,' and every man must take care of himself."

Seymour thanked the first-lieutenant for his caution, and descended with the clerk, who requested him to step into his private cabin, previous to being ushered into the gun-room, where the midshipmen's mess was held—and of which Mr. Skrimmage filled the important post of caterer. "Mrs. Skrimmage, my dear," said Seymour's conductor, "allow me to introduce to you Mr. Seymour." The lady curtsied with

great affectation, and an air of condescension, and requested our hero to take a chair—soon after which Mr. Skrimmage commenced—“ It is the custom, my dear Sir, in this ship, for every gentleman who joins the midshipman's berth, to put down one guinea as entrance money, after which the subscription is restricted to the sum of five shillings per week, which is always paid in advance. You will therefore oblige me by the trifling sum of six-and-twenty shillings, previous to my introducing you to your new messmates. You will excuse my requesting the money to be paid now, which, I assure you, does not arise from any doubt of your honour; but the fact is, being the only member of the mess who can be considered as stationary, the unpleasant duty of caterer has devolved upon me, and I have lost so much money by young gentlemen leaving the ship in a hurry, and forgetting to settle their accounts, that it has now become a rule, which is never broken through.”

As soon as Mr. Skrimmage had finished his oration, which he delivered in the softest and most persuasive manner, Seymour laid down the sum required, and having waited, at the clerk's request, to see his name, and sum paid, entered in the mess-book by Mrs. Skrimmage, he was shewn into the gun-room, which he found crowded with between thirty and forty midshipmen, whose vociferations and laughter created such a din as to drown the voice of his conductor, who cried out, "Mr. Seymour, gentlemen, to join the mess," and then quitted the noisy abode, which gave our hero the idea of bedlam broke loose.

On one side of the gun-room a party of fifteen or twenty were seated cross-legged on the deck in a circle, stripped to their shirts, with their handkerchiefs laid up like ropes in their hands. A great coat and a sleeve board, which they had borrowed from the marine tailor, who was working on the main-deck, lay in the centre, and they pretended to be at work with their

needles on the coat. It was the game of goose, the whole amusement of which consisted in giving and receiving blows. Every person in the circle had a name to which he was obliged to answer immediately when it was called, in default of which he was severely punished by all the rest. The names were distinguished by colours, as Black Cap, Red Cap; and the elegant conversation, commenced by the master tailor, ran as follows; observing that it was carried on with the greatest rapidity of utterance.

“That’s a false stitch—whose was it?”

“Black Cap.”

“No, Sir, not me, Sir.”

“Who, then, Sir?”

“Red Cap.”

“You lie, Sir.”

“Who then, Sir?”

“Blue Cap, Blue Cap.”

“You lie, Sir.”

“Who then, Sir?”

“ Yellow Cap, Yellow Cap.”

Yellow Cap unfortunately did not give the lie in time, for which he was severely punished, and the game then continued.

But the part of the game which created the most mirth was providing a goose for the tailors, which was accomplished by some of their confederates throwing into the circle any bystander who was not on his guard, and who immediately that he was thrown in, was thrashed and kicked by the whole circle until he could make his escape. An attempt of this kind was soon made upon Seymour, who, being well acquainted with the game, and perceiving the party rushing on him to push him in, dropped on his hands and knees, so that the other was caught in his own trap, by tumbling over Seymour into the circle himself, from which he at last escaped, as much mortified with the laugh raised against him as with the blows which he had received.

Seymour, who was ready to join in any fun,

applied for work, and was admitted among the journeymen.

“What’s your name?”

“Dandy Grey Russet Cap,” replied Seymour, selecting a colour which would give him ample time for answering to his call.

“Oh, I’ll be d——d but you’re an old hand,” observed one of the party, and the game continued with as much noise as ever.

But we must leave it and return to Mr. Skrimmage, who was a singular, if not solitary instance of a person in one of the lowest grades of the service, having amassed a large fortune. He had served his time under an attorney, and from that situation, why or wherefore the deponent sayeth not, shipped on board a man-of-war in the capacity of ship’s clerk. The vessel which first received him on board was an old fifty-gun ship of two decks, a few of which remained in the service at that time, although they have long been dismissed and broken up. Being a dull sailor, and fit for nothing else, she

was constantly employed in protecting large convoys of merchant-vessels to America and the West Indies. Although other men-of-war occasionally assisted her in her employ, the captain of the fifty-gun ship, from long standing, was invariably the senior officer, and the masters of the merchant vessels were obliged to go on board his ship to receive their convoy instructions, and a distinguishing pennant, which is always given without any fee.

But Skrimmage, who had never been accustomed to deliver up any paper without a fee when he was in his former profession, did not feel inclined to do so in his present. Make a direct charge he dare not—he, therefore, hit upon a *ruse de guerre* which effected his purpose. He borrowed from different parties seven or eight guineas, and when the masters of merchant vessels came on board for their instructions, he desired them to be shewn down into his cabin, where he received them with great formality and very nicely dressed. The guineas

were spread upon the desk, so that they might be easily reckoned.

“ Sit down, captain ; if you please, favour me with your name, and that of your ship.” As he took these down, he carelessly observed, “ I have delivered but seven copies of the instructions to-day as yet.”

The captain having nothing to do, in the meantime, naturally cast his eyes round the cabin and was attracted by the guineas, the number of which exactly tallied with the number of instructions delivered. It naturally occurred to him that they were the clerk's perquisites of office.

“ What is the fee, Sir ?”

“ Whatever you please—some give a guinea, some two.”

A guinea was deposited ; and thus, with his nest-eggs, Mr. Skrimmage, without making a direct charge, contrived to pocket a hundred guineas, or more, for every convoy that was put under his captain's charge. After four years,

during which he had saved a considerable sum, the ship was declared unserviceable, and broken up, and Mr. Skrimmage was sent on board of the guard-ship, where his ready wit immediately pointed out to him the advantages which might be reaped by permanently belonging to her, as clerk of the ship and caterer of the midshipman's berth. After serving in her for eight years, he was offered his rank as purser, which he refused upon the plea of being a married man, and preferring poverty with Mrs. S—— to rank and money without her. At this the reader will not be astonished when he is acquainted, that the situation which he held, was, by his dexterous plans, rendered so lucrative, that in the course of twelve years, with principal and accumulating interest, he had amassed the sum of £15,000.

A guard-ship is a receiving-ship for officers and men, until they are enabled to join, or are drafted to their respective ships. The consequence is, that an incessant change is taking

place,—a midshipman sometimes not remaining on board of her for more than three days before an opportunity offers of joining his ship. In fact, when we state that, during the war, upwards of one thousand midshipmen were received and sent away from a guard-ship, in the course of twelve months, we are considerably within the mark. Now, as Mr. Skrimmage always received one guinea as entrance to the mess, and a week's subscription in advance, and, moreover, never spent even the latter, or had his accounts examined, it is easy to conceive what a profitable situation he had created for himself. Mrs. Skrimmage, also, was a useful helpmate: she lived on board, at little expense, and, by her attentions to the dear little middies and their wearing apparel, who were sent on board to join some ship for the first time, added very considerably to his profits.

Her history was as follows. It had three æras:—she had been a lady's-maid, in town; and, in this situation, acquiring a few of the

practices of "high life," she had become something else on the town; and, finally, Mrs. Skrimmage. With the view of awing his unruly associates into respect, Mr. Skrimmage, (as well as his wife) was particularly nice in his dress and his conversation, and affected the gentleman, as she did the lady; this generally answered pretty well; but sometimes unpleasant circumstances would occur, to which his interest compelled Mr. Skrimmage to submit. It may be as well here to add, that, at the end of the war, Mr. Skrimmage applied for his promotion for long service, and, obtaining it, added his purser's half-pay to the interest of his accumulated capital, and retired from active service.

The steward and his boy entering the gun-room with two enormous black tea-kettles, put an end to the boisterous amusement. It was the signal for tea.

"Hurra for Scaldchops!" cried the master tailor, rising from the game, which was now

abandoned. A regiment of cups and saucers lined the two sides of the long table, and a general scramble ensued for seats.

"I say, Mr. *Cribbage*," cried an old master's-mate, to the caterer, who had entered shortly after the tea-kettles, and assumed his place at the end of the table. "What sort of stuff do you call this?"

"What do you mean to imply, Sir?" replied Mr. Skrimmage, with a pompous air.

"Mean to ply?—why, I mean to ply, that there's d—d little tea in this here water; why, I've seen gin as dark a colour as this."

"Steward," said Mr. Skrimmage, turning his head over his shoulder towards him, "have you not put the established allowance into the tea-pot?"

"Yes, Sir," replied the steward; "a tea-spoonful for every gentleman, and one for coming up."

"You hear, gentlemen," said Mr. Skrimmage.

"Hear!—yes, but we don't taste. I should like to see it sarved out," continued the master's-mate.

"Sir," replied Mr. Skrimmage, "I must take the liberty to observe to you, that that is a responsibility never entrusted to the steward. The established allowance is always portioned out by Mrs. Skrimmage herself."

"D—m Mrs. Skrimmage," said a voice from the other end of the table.

"What!" cried the indignant husband; "what did I hear? Who was that?"

"'Twas this young gentleman, Mr. Caterer," said a malicious lad, pointing to one opposite.

"Me, Sir!" replied the youngster, recollecting the game they had just been playing; "you lie, Sir."

"Who then, Sir?"

"Black Cap—Black Cap," pointing to another.

"I d—n Mrs. Skrimmage! You lie, Sir."

"Who then, Sir?"

“Red Cap—Red Cap.”

“I d—n Mrs. Skrimmage? You lie, Sir.”

And thus was the accusation bandied about the table, to the great amusement of the whole party, except the caterer, who regretted having taken any notice of what had been said.

“Really, gentlemen, this behaviour is such as cannot be tolerated,” observed Mr. Skrimmage, who invariably preferred the *suaviter in modo*.

“As caterer of this berth—”

“It is your duty to give us something to eat,” added one of the midshipmen.

“Gentlemen, you see what there is on the table; there are rules and regulations laid down, which cannot be deviated from, and—”

“And those are, to starve us. I’ve paid six and-twenty shillings, and have not had six-and-twenty mouthfuls in the three days that I have been here. I should like to see your accounts, Mr. Caterer.”

“Bravo! let’s have his accounts,” roared out several of the party.

"Gentlemen, my accounts are ready for inspection, and will bear, I will venture to assert, the most minute investigation; but it must be from those who have a right to demand it, and I cannot consider that a person who has only been in the ship for three days, has any pretence to examine them."

"But I have been in the ship three weeks," said another, "and have paid you one pound sixteen shillings. I have a right, and now I demand them—so let us have the accounts on the table, since we can get nothing else."

"The accounts—the accounts," were now vociferated for by such a threatening multitude of angry voices, that Mr. Skrimmage turned pale with alarm, and thought it advisable to bend to the threatening storm.

"Steward, present the gentlemen's respects to Mrs. Skrimmage, and request that she will oblige them by sending in the mess account-book. You understand—the gentlemen's respects to Mrs. Skrimmage."

“D—n Mrs. Skrimmage,” again cried out one of the midshipmen, and the game of goose was renewed with the phrase, until the steward returned with the book.

“Mrs. Skrimmage’s compliments to the gentlemen of the gun-room mess, and she has great pleasure in complying with their request ; but, in consequence of her late indisposition, the accounts are not made up further than to the end of last month.”

This was the plan upon which the wily clerk invariably acted, as it put an end to all inquiry ; but the indignation of the midshipmen was not to be controlled, and as they could not give it vent in one way, they did in another.

“Gentlemen,” said one of the oldest of the fraternity, imitating Mr. Skrimmage’s style, “I must request that you will be pleased not to kick up such a d——d row, because I wish to make a speech : and I request that two of you will be pleased to stand sentries at the door,

permitting neither ingress nor egress, that I may 'spin my yarn' without interruption.

"Gentlemen, we have paid our mess-money, and we have nothing to eat. We have asked for the accounts, and we are put off with 'indisposition.' Now, gentlemen, as there can be no doubt of the caterer's honour, I propose that we give him a receipt in full."

"And here's a pen to write it with," cried out another, holding up the sleeve-board, with which they had been playing the game.

"Then, gentlemen, are you all agreed—to cob the caterer?"

The shouts of assent frightened Mr. Skrimmage, who attempted to make his escape by the gun-room door, but was prevented by the two sentries, who had been placed there on purpose. He then requested to be heard—to be allowed to explain; but it was useless. He was dragged to the table, amidst an uproar of laughter and shouting. "Extreme bad head-aches"—"Mrs. Skrimmage"—"nervous"—"ample satisfaction"

—"conduct like gentlemen"—"complain to first-lieutenant"—were the unconnected parts of his expostulation, which could be distinguished. He was extended across the table, face downwards; the lappels of his coat thrown up, and two dozen blows, with the sleeve-board, were administered with such force, that his shrieks were even louder than the laughter and vociferation of his assailants.

During the infliction, the noise within was so great, that they did not pay attention to that which was outside, but as soon as Mr. Skrimmage had been put on his legs again, and the tumult had partially subsided, the voice of the master-at-arms requesting admittance, and the screaming of Mrs. Skrimmage, were heard at the door, which continued locked and guarded. The door was opened, and in flew the lady.

"My Skrimmage! my Skrimmage!—what have the brutes been doing to you? Oh, the wretches!" continued the lady, panting for

breath, and, turning to the midshipmen, who had retreated from her ;—" you shall all be turned out of the service—you shall—that you shall. We'll see—we'll write for a court-martial—ay, you may laugh, but we will. Contempt to a superior officer !—clerk and caterer, indeed ! The service has come to a pretty pass—you villains ! You may grin—I'll tear the eyes out of some of you, that I will. Come, Mr. Skrimmage, let us go on the quarter-deck, and see if the service is to be trifled with. Dirty scum, indeed—" and the lady stopped for want of breath occasioned by the rapidity of her utterance.

" Gentlemen," said the master-at-arms, as soon as he could obtain hearing,—“ the first-lieutenant wishes to know the reason why you are making so much noise ?”

“ Our compliments to Mr. Phillips, and we have been settling the mess account, and taking the change out of the caterer.”

“ Yes,” continued Mrs. Skrimmage, “ you

villains, you have, you paltry cheats—you blackguards—you warmin—you scum of the earth—you grinning monkeys—you !—don't put your tongue into your cheek at me, you—you beast—you ill-looking imp, or I'll write the ten commandments on your face—I will—ay, that I will—cowardly set of beggars—” (No more breath).

“ I'll tell you what, Marm,” rejoined the old master's-mate, “ if you don't clap a stopper on that jaw of your's, by George, we'll *cobb* you.”

“ Cobb me !—you will, will you ?—I should like to see you. I dare you to cobb me, you wretches !”

“ Cobb her, cobb her !” roared out all the midshipmen, who were irritated at her language ; and in a moment she was seized by a dozen of them, who dragged her to the table. Mrs. Skrimmage struggled in vain, and there appeared every chance of the threat being put in force.

“ Oh,—is this the way to treat a lady?—Skrimmage! help, help!”

Skrimmage, who had been battered almost to stupefaction, roused by the call of his frightened wife, darted to her, and throwing his arm round her waste,—“ Spare her, gentlemen, spare her, for mercy’s sake, spare her,—or,” continued he, in a faltering voice, “ if you will cobb her, let it be *over all*.”

The appeal in favour of modesty and humanity, had its due weight; and Mr. and Mrs. Skrimmage were permitted to leave the gun-room without further molestation. The lady, however, as soon as she had obtained the outside of the gun-room door, forgetting her assumed gentility, turned back, and shaking her fist at her persecutors, made use of language, with a repetition of which we will not offend our readers,—and then arm-in-arm with her husband, quitted the gun-room.

“ ‘ Mrs. Skrimmage’s compliments to the gentlemen of the gun-room mess,’ ” cried one

of the midshipmen, mimicking, which was followed by a roar of laughter, when the quartermaster again made his appearance.

“Gentlemen, the first-lieutenant says that all those who are waiting for a passage round to Plymouth are to be on deck with their traps immediately. There’s a frigate ordered round—she has the Blue Peter up, and her top-sails are sheeted home.”

This put an end to further mischief, as there were at least twenty of them whose respective ships were on that station. In the mean time, while they were getting ready, Mr. Skrimmage, having restored the precision of his apparel, proceeded to the quarter-deck, and made his complaint to the first-lieutenant; but these complaints had repeatedly been made before, and Mr. Phillips was tired of hearing them, and was aware that he deserved his fate. Mr. Skrimmage was therefore silenced with the usual remark—“How can I punish these young men? If they are in the wrong, who

slipped through my fingers immediately?—the parties you complain of are now going down the side. *Why don't you give up the caterer-ship?*”

But this, for the reasons before stated, did not suit Mr. Skrimmage, who returned below. For a day or two the mess was better supplied, from fear of a repetition of the dose; after that, it went on again as before.

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